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~~Wm. L. Barber~~  
~~Wm. L. Barber~~



PERSONAL RECOLLECTIONS  
OF  
POETS, PHILOSOPHERS  
AND  
STATESMEN.

BEING 1,001 ANECDOTES OF  
LIFE IN NEW ENGLAND,

AND OF  
THE GREAT AND ECCENTRIC CHARACTERS CELEBRATED IN HER  
HISTORY FIFTY YEARS AGO.

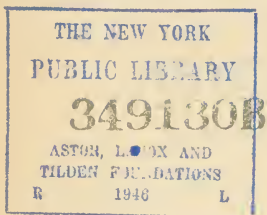
ALSO GIVING NUMEROUS ANECDOTES CONCERNING THE  
PRIVATE LIFE AND SECRET HISTORY  
OF MANY PERSONAGES

ILLUSTRIOUS IN AMERICAN PUBLIC LIFE  
DURING THE FIRST HALF OF THE PRESENT CENTURY :  
AND AN ACCOUNT OF MEN AND THINGS  
I SAW IN EUROPE.

By S. G. GOODRICH, (PETER PARLEY.)

le  
COMPLETE IN ONE VOLUME.

AN  
(Goodrich, S.)  
Goodrich  
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Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1856,  
By S. G. GOODRICH,  
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## PUBLISHER'S PREFACE TO THE PRESENT EDITION.

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THE re-issue of Mr. Goodrich's famous *Recollections of a Lifetime*, in cheap form, will fill a want long experienced, if we are to judge by the high price that second-hand copies of the first edition have always commanded when offered for sale. Although the present edition is issued in one volume instead of two, as was the case with the first edition, no curtailment has been made in the text excepting by the abridgment of certain details of Mr. Goodrich's personal business experience which have no interest at this distance of time. Of the innumerable references made to celebrated persons whom the author had known, or descriptions of important public matters that occurred within his long experience, a comparison of the index of the former with that of the present edition will show that not one has been omitted. The index contains over one thousand references to different individuals. Hardly a single name distinguished in the history of this country during the first half of the present century but will be found represented in these pages. If we were to particularize, it would be necessary to extend our introduction far beyond the space

allotted to a brief preface. Neither is the value of these *Recollections* due alone to their reference to important political personages and events, nor even to their affording the most complete narrative of the rise and progress of our literature to be found within the pages of a single volume, and described by a man who actively participated in its creation. These friendly and familiar letters, dwelling upon many journeys made under very different circumstances, give a good idea of the growth of New York and of New England, and of the changing of the ancient usages and customs that obtained throughout the country up to the commencement of the present century to the manners of to-day.



## PREFATORY NOTE.

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THE first Letter in the ensuing pages will inform the reader as to the origin of these volumes, and the leading ideas of the author in writing them. It is necessary to state, however, that although the work was begun two years since—as indicated by the date of the first of these Letters, and while the author was residing abroad—a considerable portion of it has been written within the last year, and since his return to America. This statement is necessary, in order to explain several passages which will be found scattered through its pages.

NEW YORK, SEPTEMBER, 1856.



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RECOLLECTIONS OF A LIFETIME. .



# RECOLLECTIONS OF A LIFETIME,

IN A SERIES OF

FAMILIAR LETTERS TO A FRIEND.

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## LETTER I.

*Introductory and Explanatory.*

MY DEAR C\*\*\*\*\*

A little thin sheet of paper, with a frail wafer seal, and inscribed with various hieroglyphical symbols, among which I see the postmark of Albany, has just been laid upon my table. I have opened it, and find it to be a second letter from you. Think of the pilgrimage of this innocent waif, unprotected save by faith in man and the mail, setting out upon a voyage from the banks of the Hudson, and coming straight to me at Courbevoie, just without the walls of Paris, a distance of three thousand miles!

And yet this miracle is wrought every day, every hour. I am lingering here, partly because I have taken a lease of a house and furnished it, and therefore I can not well afford to leave it at present. I am pursuing my literary labors, and such are the fa-

cilities of intercourse, by means of these little red-lipped messengers, like this I have just received from you, that I can almost as well prosecute my labors here as at home. Could I get rid of all those associations which bind a man to his birth-land; could I appease that consciousness which whispers in my ear, that the allegiance of every true man, free to follow his choice, is due to his country and his kindred, I might perhaps continue here for the remainder of my life.

My little pavilion, situated upon an elevated slope formed of the upper bank of the Seine, gives me a view of the unrivaled valley that winds between Saint Cloud and Asnières; it shows me Paris in the near distance—Montmartre to the left, and the Arch of Triumph to the right. In the rear, close at hand, is our suburban village, having the aspect of a little withered city. Around are several chateaus, and from the terraced roof of my house—which is arranged for a promenade—I can look into their gardens and pleasure-grounds, sparkling with fountains and glowing with fruits and flowers. A walk of a few rods brings me to the bank of the Seine, where boatmen are ever ready to give the pleasure-seeker a row or a sail; in ten minutes by rail, or an hour on foot, I can be in Paris. In about the same time I may be sauntering in the Avenue de Neuilly, the Bois de Boulogne, or the galleries of Versailles. My rent is but about four hundred dollars a year, with the freedom of the gar-

dens and grounds of the chateau, of which my residence is an appendage. It is the nature of this climate to bring no excessive cold and no extreme heat. You may sit upon the grass till midnight of a summer evening, and fear no chills or fever; no troops of flies, instinctively knowing your weak point, settle upon your nose and disturb your morning nap or your afternoon siesta; no elvish mosquitoes invade the sanctity of your sleep, and force you to listen to their detestable serenade, and then make you pay for it, as if you had ordered the entertainment. If there be a place on earth combining economy and comfort—where one may be quiet, and yet in the very midst of life—it is here. Why, then, should I not remain? In one word, because I would rather be at home. This is, indeed, a charming country, but it is not mine. I could never reconcile myself to the idea of spending my life in a foreign land.

I am therefore preparing to return to New York the next summer, with the intention of making that city my permanent residence. In the mean time, I am not idle, for, as you know, the needs of my family require me to continue grinding at the mill. Besides one or two other trifling engagements, *I have actually determined upon carrying out your suggestion, that I should write a memoir of my life and times—* a panorama of my observations and experience. You encourage me with the idea that an account of my life, common-place as it has been, will find readers,

and at the same time, your recommendation naturally suggests a form in which this may be given to the public, divested of the air of egotism which generally belongs to autobiography. I may write my history in the form of letters to you, and thus tell a familiar story in a familiar way—to an old friend.

I take due note of what you recommend—that I should make my work essentially a personal narrative. You suggest that so long as the great study of mankind is man, so long any life—supposing it to be not positively vicious—if truly and frankly portrayed, will prove amusing, perhaps instructive. I admit the force of this, and it has its due influence upon me; but still I shall not make my book, either wholly or mainly, a personal memoir. I have no grudges to gratify, no by-blows to give, no apologies to make, no explanations to offer—at least none which could reasonably find place in a work like this. I have no ambition which could be subserved by a publication of a merely personal nature: to confess the truth, I should rather feel a sense of humiliation at appearing thus in print, as it would inevitably suggest the idea of pretense beyond performance.

What I propose is this: venturing to presume upon your sympathy thus far, I invite you to go with me, in imagination, over the principal scenes I have witnessed, while I endeavor to make you share in the impressions they produced upon my own mind. Thus I shall carry you back to my early days, to my native

village, the "sweet Auburn" of my young fancy, and present to you the homely country life in which I was born and bred. Those pastoral scenes were epics to my childhood; and though the heroes and heroines consisted mainly of the deacons of my father's church and the school-ma'ams that taught me to read and write, I shall still hope to inspire you with a portion of the loving reverence with which I regard their memories. I shall endeavor to interest you in some of the household customs of our New England country life, fifty years ago, when the Adams delved and the Eves span, and thought it no stain upon their gentility. I shall let you into the intimacy of my boyhood, and permit you to witness my failures as well as my triumphs. In this the first stage of my career, I shall rely upon your good nature, in permitting me to tell my story in my own way. If I make these early scenes and incidents the themes of a little moralizing, I hope for your indulgence.

From this period, as the horizon of my experience becomes somewhat enlarged, I may hope to interest you in the topics that naturally come under review. As you are well acquainted with the outline of my life, I do not deem it necessary to forewarn you that my history presents little that is out of the beaten track of common experience. I have no marvels to tell, no secrets to unfold, no riddles to solve. It is true that in the course of a long and busy career, I have seen a variety of men and things, and had my share



of vicissitudes in the shifting drama of life; still the interest of my story must depend less upon the importance of my revelations than the sympathy which naturally belongs to a personal narrative. I am perfectly aware that in regard to many of the events I shall have occasion to describe, many of the scenes I shall portray, many of the characters I shall bring upon the stage, my connection was only that of a spectator; nevertheless, I shall hope to impart to them a certain life and reality by arranging them continuously upon the thread of my remembrances.

This, then, is my preface; as the wind and weather of my humor shall favor, I intend to proceed and send you letter by letter as I write. After a few specimens, I shall ask your opinion; if favorable, I shall go on, if otherwise, I shall abandon the enterprise. I am determined, if I publish the work, to make you responsible for my success before the public.

S. G. GOODRICH.

COURBEVOIE, NEAR PARIS, JUNE, 1854.

## LETTER II.

*Geography and Chronology—The Old Brown House—Grandfathers—Ridgefield—The Meeting-House—Parson Mead—Keeler's Tavern—Lieutenant Smith—The Cannon-Ball.*

MY DEAR C\*\*\*\*\*

It is said that geography and chronology are the two eyes of history: hence, I suppose that in any narrative which pretends to be in some degree historical, the when and where, as well as the how, should be distinctly presented. I am aware that a large part of mankind are wholly deficient in the bump of locality, and march through the world in utter indifference as to whether they are going north or south, east or west. With these, the sun may rise and set as it pleases, at any point of the compass; but for myself, I could never be happy, even in my bedroom or study, without knowing which way was north. You will expect, therefore, that in beginning my story, I make you distinctly acquainted with the place where I was born, as well as the objects which immediately surrounded it. If, indeed, throughout my narrative, I habitually regard geography and chronology as essential elements of a story, you will at least understand that it is done by design and not by accident.

In the western part of the State of Connecticut, is

a small town by the name of Ridgefield. This title is descriptive, and indicates the general form and position of the place. It is, in fact, a collection of hills, rolled into one general and commanding elevation. On the west is a ridge of mountains, forming the boundary between the States of Connecticut and New York; to the south the land spreads out in wooded undulations to Long Island Sound; east and north, a succession of hills, some rising up against the sky, and others fading away in the distance, bound the horizon. In this town, in an antiquated and rather dilapidated house of shingles and clapboards, I was born on the 19th of August, 1793.

My father, Samuel Goodrich, was minister of the First Congregational Church of that place, there being then, no other religious society and no other clergyman in the town, except at Ridgebury—the remote northern section, which was a separate parish. He was the son of Elizur Goodrich, a distinguished minister of the same persuasion, at Durham, Connecticut. Two of his brothers were men of eminence—the late Chauncey Goodrich of Hartford, and Elizur Goodrich of New Haven. My mother was a daughter of John Ely, a physician of Saybrook, whose name figures not unworthily in the annals of the revolutionary war.

I was the sixth child of a family of ten children,

two of whom died in infancy, and eight of whom lived to be married and settled in life. All but two of the latter are still living. My father's annual salary for the first twenty-five years, and during his ministry at Ridgefield, averaged £120, old currency—that is, about four hundred dollars a year: the last twenty-five years, during which he was settled at Berlin, near Hartford, his stipend was about five hundred dollars a year. He was wholly without patrimony, and owing to peculiar circumstances, which will be hereafter explained, my mother had not even the ordinary outfit, as they began their married life. Yet they so brought up their family of eight children, that they all attained respectable positions in life, and at my father's death, he left an estate of four thousand dollars.\* These facts throw light upon the simple annals of a country clergyman in Connecticut, half a century ago; they also bear testimony to the thrifty energy and wise frugality of my parents, and especially of my mother, who was the guardian deity of the household.

Ridgefield belongs to the county of Fairfield, and is now a handsome town, as well on account of its artificial as its natural advantages—with some 2000 inhabitants. It is fourteen miles from Long Island Sound—of which its many swelling hills afford charm-

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\* One thousand of this was received, a short time before the death of my parents, for the revolutionary services of my maternal grandfather.

ing views. The main street is a mile in length, and is now embellished with several handsome houses. About the middle of it there is, or was, some forty years ago, a white wooden meeting-house, which belonged to my father's congregation. It stood in a small grassy square, the favorite pasture of numerous flocks of geese, and the frequent playground of school-boys, especially of Saturday afternoons. Close by the front door ran the public road, and the pulpit, facing it, looked out upon it, in fair summer Sundays, as I well remember by a somewhat amusing incident.

In the contiguous town of Lower Salem, dwelt an aged minister by the name of Mead. He was all his life marked with eccentricity, and about these days of which I speak, his mind was rendered yet more erratic by a touch of paralysis. He was, however, still able to preach, and on a certain Sunday, having exchanged with my father, he was in the pulpit and engaged in making his opening prayer. He had already begun his invocation, when David P...., who was the Jehu of that generation, dashed by the front door, upon a horse—a clever animal of which he was but too proud—in a full, round trot. The echo of the clattering hoofs filled the church,—which being of shingles and clapboards was sonorous as a drum—and arrested the attention as well of the minister as the congregation, even before the rider had reached it. The minister was fond of horses—almost to frailty—and from the first, his practiced

ear perceived that the sounds came from a beast of bottom. When the animal shot by the door, he could not restrain his admiration, which was accordingly thrust into the very marrow of his prayer: "We pray thee, O Lord, in a particuler and peculiar manner—that's a real smart critter—to forgive us our manifold trespasses, in a particular and peeuliar manner," &c.

I have somewhere heard of a traveler on horseback, who, just at eventide, being uncertain of his road, inquired of a person he chanced to meet, the way to Barkhamstead.

"You are in Barkhamstead now," was the reply.

"Yes, but where is the center of the place?"

"It hasn't got any center."

"Well—but direct me to the tavern."

"There ain't any tavern."

"Yes, but the meeting-house?"

"Why didn't you ask that afore? There it is, over the hill!"

So, in those days, in Connecticut—as doubtless in other parts of New England—the meeting-house was the great geographical monument, the acknowledged meridian of every town and village. Even a place without a center or a tavern, had its house of worship, and this was its initial point of reckoning. It was, indeed, something more. It was the town-hall, where all public meetings were held, for civil purposes; it was the temple of religion, the ark of the covenant, the pillar of society—religious, soeial, and moral—

to the people around. It will not be considered strange then, if I look back to the meeting-house of Ridgefield, as not only a most revered edifice—covered with clapboards and shingles, though it was—but as in some sense the starting point of my existence. Here, at least, linger many of my most cherished remembrances.

A few rods to the south of this, there was, and still is, a tavern, kept in my day, by Squire Keeler. This institution ranked second only to the meeting-house; for the tavern of those days was generally the center of news, and the gathering place for balls, musical entertainments, public shows, &c.; and this particular tavern had special claims to notice. It was, in the first place, on the great thoroughfare of that day, between Boston and New York, and had become a general and favorite stopping-place for travelers. It was, moreover, kept by a hearty old gentleman, who united in his single person the varied functions of publican, postmaster, representative, justice of the peace, and I know not what else. He besides had a thrifty wife, whose praise was in all the land. She loved her customers, especially members of Congress, governors, and others in authority, who wore powder and white-top boots, and who migrated to and fro, in the lofty leisure of their own coaches. She was indeed a woman of mark, and her life has its moral. She scoured and scrubbed and kept things going, until she was seventy years old, at which time, du-



ring an epidemic, she was threatened with an attack. She, however, declared that she had not time to be sick, and kept on working, so that the disease passed her by, though it made sad havoc all around her—especially with more dainty dames, who had leisure to follow the fashion.

Besides all this, there was an historical interest attached to Keeler's tavern, for deeply imbedded in the northeastern corner-post, there was a cannon-ball, planted there during the famous fight with the British in 1777. It was one of the chief historical monuments of the town, and was visited by all curious travelers who came that way.\* Little can the present generation imagine with what glowing interest, what ecstatic wonder, what big round eyes, the rising generation of Ridgefield, half a century ago, listened to the account of the fight as given by Lieutenant Smith, himself a witness of the event and a participator of the conflict, sword in hand.

This personage, whom I shall have occasion again to introduce to my readers, was, in my time, a justice

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\* Keeler's tavern appears to have received several cannon-shots from the British as they marched through the street, these being directed against a group of Americans who had gathered there. A cannon-ball came crashing through the building, and crossed a staircase just as a man was ascending the steps. The noise and the splinters overcame him with fright, and he tumbled to the bottom, exclaiming—"I'm killed, I'm a dead man!" After a time, however, he discovered that he was unhurt, and thereupon he scampered away, and did not stop till he was safe in the adjoining town of Wilton.

of the peace, town librarian, and general oracle in such loose matters as geography, history, and law—then about as uncertain and unsettled in Ridgefield, as is now the fate of Sir John Franklin, or the longitude of Lilliput. He had a long, lean face; long, lank, silvery hair, and an unctuous, whining voice. With these advantages, he spoke with the authority of a seer, and especially in all things relating to the revolutionary war.

The agitating scenes of that event, so really great in itself, so unspeakably important to the country, had transpired some five and twenty years before. The existing generation of middle age, had all witnessed it; nearly all had shared in its vicissitudes. On every hand there were corporals, sergeants, lieutenants, captains, and colonels—no strutting fops in militia buckram, raw blue and buff, all fuss and feathers—but soldiers, men who had seen service and won laurels in the tented field. Every old man, every old woman had stories to tell, radiant with the vivid realities of personal observation or experience. Some had seen Washington, and some Old Put; one was at the capture of Ticonderoga under Ethan Allen; another was at Bennington, and actually heard old Stark say, "Victory this day, or my wife Molly is a widow!" Some were at the taking of Stony Point, and others in the sanguinary struggle of Monmouth. One had witnessed the execution of André, and another had been present at the capture of Burgoyne.

The time which had elapsed since these events, had served only to magnify and glorify these scenes, as well as the actors, especially in the imagination of the rising generation. If perchance we could now dig up, and galvanize into life, a contemporary of Julius Cæsar, who was present and saw him cross the Rubicon, and could tell us how he looked and what he said—we should listen with somewhat of the greedy wonder with which the boys of Ridgefield listened to Lieutenant Smith, when of a Saturday afternoon, seated on the stoop of Keeler's tavern, he discoursed upon the discovery of America by Columbus, Braddock's defeat, and the old French war—the latter a real epic, embellished with romantic episodes of Indian massacres and captivities. When he came to the Revolution, and spoke of the fight at Ridgefield, and punctuated his discourse with a present cannon-ball, sunk six inches deep in a corner-post of the very house in which we sat, you may well believe it was something more than words—it was, indeed, “action, action, glorious action!” How little can people nowadays—with curiosity trampled down by the march of mind and the schoolmaster abroad—comprehend or appreciate these things!

## LETTER III.

*The first Remembered Event—High Ridge—The Spy-glass—Sea and Mountain—The Peel—The Black Patch in the road.*

MY DEAR C\*\*\*\*\*

You will perhaps forgive me for a little circumlocution, in the outset of my story. My desire is to carry you with me in my narrative, and make you see in imagination, what I have seen. This naturally requires a little effort—like that of the bird in rising from the ground, which turns his wing first to the right and then to the left, vigorously beating the atmosphere, in order to overcome the gravity which weighs the body down to earth, ere yet it feels the quickening impulse of a conscious launch upon the air.

My memory goes distinctly back to the year 1797, when I was four years old. At that time a great event happened—great in the near and narrow horizon of childhood: we removed from the Old House to the New House! This latter, situated on a road tending westward and branching from the main street, my father had just built; and it then appeared to me quite a stately mansion and very beautiful, inasmuch as it was painted red behind and white in front—most of the dwellings thereabouts being of

the dun complexion which pine-boards and chestnut-shingles assume, from exposure to the weather. Long after—having been absent twenty years—I revisited this my early home, and found it shrunk into a very small and ordinary two-story dwelling, wholly divested of its paint, and scarcely thirty feet square.

This building, apart from all other dwellings, was situated on what is called High Ridge—a long hill, looking down upon the village, and commanding an extensive view of the surrounding country. From our upper windows, this was at once beautiful and diversified. On the south, as I have said, the hills sloped in a sea of undulations down to Long Island Sound, a distance of some fourteen miles. This beautiful sheet of water, like a strip of pale sky, with the island itself, more deeply tinted, beyond, was visible in fair weather, for a stretch of sixty miles, to the naked eye. The vessels—even the smaller ones, sloops, schooners, and fishing craft—could be seen, creeping like insects over the surface. With a spy-glass—and my father had one bequeathed to him by Nathan Kellogg, a sailor, who made rather a rough voyage of life, but anchored at last in the bosom of the church, as this bequest intimates—we could see the masts, sails, and rigging. It was a poor, dim affair, compared with modern instruments of the kind; but to me, its revelations of an element which then seemed as beautiful, as remote, and as mystical as the heavens, surpassed the wonders of

the firmament as since disclosed to my mind by Lord Rosse's telescope.

To the west, at the distance of three miles, lay the undulating ridge of hills, cliffs, and precipices already mentioned, and which bear the name of West Mountain. They are some five hundred feet in height, and from our point of view had an imposing appearance. Beyond them, in the far distance, glimmered the ghost-like peaks of the Highlands along the Hudson. These two prominent features of the spreading landscape—the sea and the mountain, ever present, yet ever remote—impressed themselves on my young imagination with all the enchantment which distance lends to the view. I have never lost my first love. Never, even now, do I catch a glimpse of either of these two rivals of nature, such as I first learned them by heart, but I feel a gush of emotion as if I had suddenly met with the cherished companions of my childhood. In after days, even the purple velvet of the Apennines and the poetic azure of the Mediterranean, have derived additional beauty to my imagination from mingling with these vivid associations of my childhood.

It was to the New House, then, thus situated, that we removed, as I have stated, when I was four years old. On that great occasion, every thing available for draft or burden was put in requisition; and I was permitted, or required, I forget which, to carry the *peel*, as it was then called, but which would now bear



the title of shovel. Birmingham had not then been heard of in those parts, or at least was a great way off; so this particular utensil had been forged expressly for my father by David Olmstead, the blacksmith, as was the custom in those days. I recollect it well, and can state that it was a sturdy piece of iron, the handle being four feet long, with a hemispherical knob at the end. As I carried it along, I doubtless felt a touch of that consciousness of power, which must have filled the breast of Samson as he bore off the gates of Gaza. I recollect perfectly well to have perspired under the operation, for the distance of our migration was half a mile, and the season was summer.

One thing more I remember: I was barefoot; and as we went up the lane which diverged from the main road to the house, we passed over a patch of earth, blackened by cinders, where my feet were hurt by pieces of melted glass and metal. I inquired what this meant, and was told that here a house was burned down\* by the British troops already men-

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\* Lossing says, in his *Field Book*, p. 409, vol. i.: "Having repulsed the Americans, Tryon's army encamped upon *high ground*, about a mile south of the Congregational church in Ridgefield, until daylight the next morning, when they resumed their march toward Norwalk and Compo, through Wilton. Four dwellings were burned in Ridgefield, and other private property was destroyed, when the marauders struck their tents."

The "high ground" here spoken of was High Ridge, the precise spot where the house I have described, stood. Doubtless the vestiges here mentioned were those of one of the four houses alluded to.



tioned—and then in full retreat—as a signal to the ships that awaited them on the Sound where they had landed, and where they intended to embark.

This detail may seem trifling, but it is not without significance. It was the custom in those days for boys to go barefoot in the mild season. I recollect few things in life more delightful than, in the spring, to cast away my shoes and stockings, and have a glorious scamper over the fields. Many a time, contrary to the express injunctions of my mother, have I stolen this bliss, and many a time have I been punished by a severe cold for my imprudence, if not my disobedience. Yet the bliss then seemed a compensation for the retribution. In these exercises I felt as if stepping on air—as if leaping aloft on wings. I was so impressed with the exultant emotions thus experienced, that I repeated them a thousand times in happy dreams, especially in my younger days. Even now, these visions sometimes come to me in sleep, though with a lurking consciousness that they are but a mockery of the past—sad monitors of the change which time has wrought upon me.

As to the black patch in the lane, that too had its meaning. The story of a house burned down by a foreign army, seized upon my imagination. Every time I passed the place, I ruminated upon it, and put a hundred questions as to how and when it happened. I was soon master of the whole story, and of other similar events which had occurred all over the

country. I was thus initiated into the spirit of that day, and which has never wholly subsided in our country, inasmuch as the war of the Revolution was alike unjust in its origin, and cruel as to the manner in which it was waged. It was, moreover, fought on our own soil, thus making the whole people share, personally, in its miseries. There was scarcely a family in Connecticut whom it did not visit, either immediately or remotely, with the shadows of mourning and desolation. The British nation, to whom this conflict was a foreign war, are slow to comprehend the depth and universality of the popular dislike of England, here in America. Could they know the familiar annals of our towns and villages—burned, plundered, sacked—with all the attendant horrors, for the avowed purpose of punishing a nation of rebels, and those rebels of their own kith and kin; could they be made acquainted with the deeds of those twenty thousand Hessians, sent hither by King George, and who have left their name in our language as a word signifying brigands, who sell their blood and commit murder, massacre, and rape for hire: could they thus read the history of minds and hearts, influenced at the fountains of life for several generations—they would perhaps comprehend, if they could not approve, the habitual distrust of British influence, which lingers among our people. At least, thus instructed, and bearing in mind what has since happened—another war with England, in

which our own territory was the scene of conflict, together with the incessant hostility of the British press toward our manners, our institutions, our policy, our national character, manifested in every form, and from the beginning to the end—the people of England might in some degree comprehend what always strikes them with amazement, that love of England is not largely infused into our national character and habits of thought.

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## LETTER IV.

*Education in New England—The Burial Ground of the Suicide—West Lane—Old Chichester—The School-House—The First Day at School—Aunt Delight—Lewis Olmstead—A Return after Twenty Years—Peter Parley and Mother Goose.*

MY DEAR C\*\*\*\*\*

The devotion of the New-England people to education has been celebrated from time immemorial. In this trait of character, Connecticut was not behind the foremost of her sister puritans. Now, among the traditions of the days to which my narrative refers, there was one which set forth that the law of the land assigned to persons committing suicide, a burial-place where four roads met. I do not recollect that this popular notion was ever tested in Ridgefield, for

nobody in those innocent days, so far as I know, became weary of existence. Be this as it may, it is certain that the village school-house was often planted in the very spot supposed to be the privileged graveyard of suicides. The reason is plain enough: the roads were always of ample width at the crossings, and the narrowest of these spaces was sufficient for the little brown seminaries of learning. At the same time—and this was doubtless the material point—the land belonged to the town, and so the site would cost nothing. Such were the ideas of village education in enlightened New England half a century ago. Let those who deny the progress of society, compare this with the state of things at the present day.

About three-fourths of a mile from my father's house, on the winding road to Lower Salem which I have already mentioned, and which bore the name of West Lane, was the school-house where I took my first lessons, and received the foundations of my very slender education. I have since been sometimes asked where I graduated: my reply has always been, "at West Lane." Generally speaking, this has ended the inquiry, whether because my interlocutors have confounded this venerable institution with "Lane Seminary," or have not thought it worth while to risk an exposure of their ignorance as to the college in which I was educated, I am unable to say.

The site of the school-house was a triangular piece

of land, measuring perhaps a rood in extent, and lying, according to the custom of those days, at the meeting of four roads. The ground hereabouts—as everywhere else in Ridgefield—was exceedingly stony, and in making the pathway the stones had been thrown out right and left, and there remained in heaps on either side, from generation to generation. All around was bleak and desolate. Loose, squat stone walls, with innumerable breaches, inclosed the adjacent fields. A few tufts of elder, with here and there a patch of briers and pokeweed, flourished in the gravelly soil. Not a tree, however, remained, save an aged chestnut, at the western angle of the space. This, certainly, had not been spared for shade or ornament, but probably because it would have cost too much labor to cut it down, for it was of ample girth. At all events it was the oasis in our desert during summer; and in autumn, as the burrs disclosed its fruit, it resembled a besieged city. The boys, like so many catapults, hurled at it stones and sticks, until every nut had capitulated.

Two houses only were at hand: one, surrounded by an ample barn, a teeming orchard, and an enormous wood-pile, belonged to Granther Baldwin; the other was the property of “Old Chich-es-ter,” an uncouth, unsocial being, whom everybody for some reason or other seemed to despise and shun. His house was of stone and of one story. He had a cow, which every year had a calf. He had a wife—filthy, un-

combed, and vaguely reported to have been brought from the old country. This is about the whole history of the man, so far as it is written in the authentic traditions of the parish. His premises, an acre in extent, consisted of a tongue of land between two of the converging roads. No boy, that I ever heard of, ventured to cast a stone, or to make an incursion into this territory, though it lay close to the school-house. I have often, in passing, peeped timidly over the walls, and caught glimpses of a stout man with a drab coat, drab breeches, and drab gaiters, glazed with ancient grease and long abrasion, prowling about the house; but never did I discover him outside of his own dominion. I know it was darkly intimated that he had been a tory, and was tarred and feathered in the revolutionary war, but as to the rest he was a perfect myth. Granther Baldwin was a character no less marked, but I must reserve his picture for a subsequent letter.

The school-house itself consisted of rough, unpainted clapboards, upon a wooden frame. It was plastered within, and contained two apartments—a little entry, taken out of a corner for a wardrobe, and the school-room proper. The chimney was of stone, and pointed with mortar, which, by the way, had been dug into a honeycomb by uneasy and enterprising penknives. The fireplace was six feet wide and four feet deep. The flue was so ample and so perpendicular, that the rain, sleet, and snow fell direct to the hearth.

In winter, the battle for life with green fizzling fuel, which was brought in sled lengths and cut up by the scholars, was a stern one. Not unfrequently, the wood, gushing with sap as it was, chanced to be out, and as there was no living without fire, the thermometer being ten or twenty degrees below zero, the school was dismissed, whereat all the scholars rejoiced aloud, not having the fear of the schoolmaster before their eyes.

It was the custom at this place, to have a woman's school in the summer months, and this was attended only by young children. It was, in fact, what we now call a primary or infant school. In winter, a man was employed as teacher, and then the girls and boys of the neighborhood, up to the age of eighteen, or even twenty, were among the pupils. It was not uncommon, at this season, to have forty scholars crowded into this little building.

I was about six years old when I first went to school. My teacher was Aunt Delight, that is, Delight Benedict, a maiden lady of fifty, short and bent, of sallow complexion and solemn aspect. I remember the first day with perfect distinctness. I went alone—for I was familiar with the road, it being that which passed by our old house. I carried a little basket, with bread and butter within, for my dinner, the same being covered over with a white cloth. When I had proceeded about half way, I lifted the cover, and debated whether I would not eat my din-



ner, then. I believe it was a sense of duty only that prevented my doing so, for in those happy days, I always had a keen appetite. Bread and butter were then infinitely superior to *pâté de foie gras* now; but still, thanks to my training, I had also a conscience. As my mother had given me the food for dinner, I did not think it right to convert it into lunch, even though I was strongly tempted.

I think we had seventeen scholars—boys and girls—mostly of my own age. Among them were some of my after companions. I have since met several of them—one at Savannah, and two at Mobile, respectably established, and with families around them. Some remain, and are now among the gray old men of the town; the names of others I have seen inscribed on the tombstones of their native village. And the rest—where are they?

The school being organized, we were all seated upon benches, made of what were called *slabs*—that is, boards having the exterior or rounded part of the log on one side: as they were useless for other purposes, these were converted into school-benches, the rounded part down. They had each four supports, consisting of straddling wooden legs, set into augur-holes. Our own legs swayed in the air, for they were too short to touch the floor. Oh, what an awe fell over me, when we were all seated and silence reigned around!

The children were called up, one by one, to Aunt

Delight, who sat on a low chair, and required each, as a preliminary, to make his manners, consisting of a small sudden nod or jerk of the head. She then placed the spelling-book—which was Dilworth's—before the pupil, and with a buck-handled penknife pointed, one by one, to the letters of the alphabet, saying, "What's that?" If the child knew his letters, the "what's that?" very soon ran on thus:

"What's that?"

"A."

"'Stha-a-t?"

"B."

"Sna-a-a-t?"

"C."

"Sna-a-a-t?"

"D."

"Sna-a-a-t?"

"E." &c.

I looked upon these operations with intense curiosity and no small respect, until my own turn came. I went up to the school-mistress with some emotion, and when she said, rather spitefully, as I thought, "Make your obeisance!" my little intellects all fled away, and I did nothing. Having waited a second, gazing at me with indignation, she laid her hand on the top of my head, and gave it a jerk which made my teeth clash. I believe I bit my tongue a little; at all events, my sense of dignity was offended, and when she pointed to A, and asked what it was, it

swam before me dim and hazy, and as big as a full moon. She repeated the question, but I was doggedly silent. Again, a third time, she said, "What's that?" I replied: "Why don't you tell me what it is? I didn't come here to learn you your letters!" I have not the slightest remembrance of this, for my brains were all a-woolgathering; but as Aunt Delight affirmed it to be a fact, and it passed into a tradition, I put it in. I may have told this story some years ago in one of my books, imputing it to a fictitious hero, yet this is its true origin, according to my recollection.

What immediately followed I do not clearly remember, but one result is distinctly traced in my memory. In the evening of this eventful day, the school-mistress paid my parents a visit, and recounted to their astonished ears this, my awful contempt of authority. My father, after hearing the story, got up and went away; but my mother, who was a careful disciplinarian, told me not to do so again! I always had a suspicion that both of them smiled on one side of their faces, even while they seemed to sympathize with the old petticoat and pen-knife pedagogue, on the other; still I do not affirm it, for I am bound to say, of both my parents, that I never knew them, even in trifles, say one thing while they meant another.

I believe I achieved the alphabet that summer, but my after progress, for a long time, I do not remember. Two years later I went to the winter-school at the

same place, kept by Lewis Olmstead—a man who had a call for plowing, mowing, carting manure, &c., in summer, and for teaching school in the winter, with a talent for music at all seasons, wherefore he became chorister upon occasion, when, peradventure, Deacon Hawley could not officiate. He was a celebrity in ciphering, and 'Squire Seymour declared that he was the greatest "arithmeticker" in Fairfield county. All I remember of his person is his hand, which seemed to me as big as Goliath's, judging by the claps of thunder it made in my ears on one or two occasions.

The next step of my progress which is marked in my memory, is the spelling of words of two syllables. I did not go very regularly to school, but by the time I was ten years old I had learned to write, and had made a little progress in arithmetic. There was not a grammar, a geography, or a history of any kind in the school. Reading, writing, and arithmetic were the only things taught, and these very indifferently—not wholly from the stupidity of the teacher, but because he had forty scholars, and the standards of the age required no more than he performed. I did as well as the other scholars, certainly no better. I had excellent health and joyous spirits; in leaping, running, and wrestling I had but one superior of my age, and that was Stephen Olmstead, a snug-built fellow, smaller than myself, and who, despite our rivalry, was my chosen friend and companion. I seemed to live

for play: alas! how the world has changed since I have discovered that we live to agonize over study, work, care, ambition, disappointment, and then ——?

As I shall not have occasion again, formally, to introduce this seminary into my narrative, I may as well close my account of it now. After I had left my native town for some twenty years, I returned and paid it a visit. Among the monuments that stood high in my memory was the West Lane school-house. Unconsciously carrying with me the measures of childhood, I had supposed it to be at least thirty feet square; how had it dwindled when I came to estimate it by the new standards I had formed! It was in all things the same, yet wholly changed to me. What I had deemed a respectable edifice, as it now stood before me was only a weather-beaten little shed, which, upon being measured, I found to be less than twenty feet square. It happened to be a warm, summer day, and I ventured to enter the place. I found a girl, some eighteen years old, keeping a ma'am school for about twenty scholars, some of whom were studying Parley's Geography. The mistress was the daughter of one of my school-mates, and some of the boys and girls were grandchildren of the little brood which gathered under the wing of Aunt Delight, when I was an a-b-c-darian. None of them, not even the school-mistress, had ever heard of me. The name of my father, as having ministered unto the people of Ridgefield in some bygone

age, was faintly traced in their recollection. As to Peter Parley, whose geography they were learning—they supposed him some decrepit old gentleman hobbling about on a crutch, a long way off, for whom, nevertheless, they had a certain affection, inasmuch as he had made geography into a story-book. The frontispiece-picture of the old fellow, with his gouty foot in a chair, threatening the boys that if they touched his tender toe, he would tell them no more stories—secured their respect, and placed him among the saints in the calendar of their young hearts. Well, thought I, if this goes on I may yet rival Mother Goose!

## LETTER V.

*The Joyous Nature of Childhood—Drawbacks—The Small-pox—The Pest House—Our House a Hospital—Inoculation—The Force of Early Impressions.*

MY DEAR C\*\*\*\*\*

I hope you will not imagine that I am thinking too little of your amusement and too much of my own, if I stop a few moments to note the lively recollections I entertain of the joyousness of my early life, and not of mine only, but that of my playmates and companions. In looking back to those early days, the whole circle of the seasons seems to me almost like one unbroken morning of pleasure.

I was of course subjected to the usual crosses incident to my age—those painful and mysterious visitations sent upon children—the measles, mumps, whooping-cough, and the like—usually regarded as retributions for the false step of our mother Eve in the Garden; but they have almost passed from my memory, as if overflowed and borne away by the general drift of happiness which filled my bosom. Among these calamities, one monument alone remains—the small-pox. It was in the year 1798, as I




well remember, that my father's house was converted into a hospital, or, as it was then called, a "pest-house," where, with some dozen other children, I was inoculated for this disease, then the scourge and terror of the world.

It will be remembered that Jenner published his first memoir upon vaccination about this period, but his discoveries were generally repudiated as mere charlatanism, for some time after. There were regular small-pox hospitals in different parts of New England, usually in isolated situations, so as not to risk dissemination of the dreaded infection. One of these, and quite the most celebrated of its time, had been established by my maternal grandfather upon Duck Island, lying off the present town of West Brook—then called Pochoaug—in Long Island Sound; but it had been destroyed by the British during the Revolution, and was never revived. There was one upon the northern shore of Long Island, and doubtless many others; but as it was often inconvenient to send children to these places, several families would unite and convert one house, favorably situated, into a temporary hospital, for the inoculation of such as needed it. It was in pursuance of this custom that our habitation was selected, on the present occasion, as the scene of this somewhat awful process.

There were many circumstances which contributed to impress this event upon my mind. In the first place, there was a sort of popular horror of the "pest-

house," not merely because of the virulent nature of small-pox, but because of a common superstitious feeling in the community—though chiefly confined to the ignorant classes—that voluntarily to create the disease, was contrary to nature, and a plain tempting of Providence. In their view, if death ensued, it was esteemed little better than murder. Thus, as our house was being put in order for the coming scene, and as the subjects of the fearful experiment were gathering in, a gloom pervaded all countenances, and its shadow naturally fell upon me.

The lane in which our house was situated was fenced up, north and south, so as to cut off all intercourse with the world around. A flag was raised, and upon it were inscribed the ominous words  "SMALL-POX." My uncle and aunt, from New Haven, arrived with their three children.\* Half a dozen others of the neighborhood were gathered together, making, with our own children, somewhat over a dozen subjects for the experiment. When all was ready, like Noah and his family we were shut in. Provisions were deposited in a basket at a point agreed upon, down the lane. Thus, we were cut off from the world, excepting only that Dr. Perry, the physician, ventured to visit us in our fell dominion.

As to myself, the disease passed lightly over, leav-

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\* Elizur Goodrich, now of Hartford; Professor Chauncey A. Goodrich, now of Yale College; and the late Mrs. Nancy Ellsworth, wife of H. L. Ellsworth, former Commissioner of Patents, at Washington.

ing, however, its indisputable autographs upon various parts of my body.\* Were it not for these testimonials, I should almost suspect that I had escaped the disease, for I only remember, among my symptoms and my sufferings, a little headache, and the privation of salt and butter upon my hasty-pudding. My restoration to these privileges I distinctly recollect: doubtless these gave me more pleasure than the clean bill of health which they implied. Several of the patients suffered severely, and among them my brother and one of my cousins. The latter, in a recent conversation upon the subject, claimed the honor of two thousand pustules, and was not a little humbled when, by documentary evidence, they were reduced to two hundred.

Yet, while it is evident that I was subjected to the usual drawbacks upon the happiness of childhood, these were, in fact, so few as to have passed away from my mind, leaving in my memory only the general tide of life, seeming, as I look back, to have been one bright current of enjoyment, flowing

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\* It may not be useless to state, in passing, that in 1850, one of my family, who had been vaccinated thirty years before, was attacked by varioloid. It being deemed advisable that all of us should be vaccinated, I was subjected to the process, and this took such effect upon me that I had a decided fever, with partial delirium, for two days; thus showing my accessibility to the infection of small-pox. Here then was evidence that both vaccination and inoculation are not perpetual guarantees against this disease—a fact, indeed, now fully admitted by the medical faculty. The doctrine is, that the power of these preventives becomes, at last, worn out, and therefore prudence dictates repetition of vaccination after about ten years.

amid flowers, and all in the company of companions as happy and jubilant as myself. By a beautiful alchemy of the heart, the clouds of early life appear afterward to be only accessories to the universal spring-tide of pleasure. Even this dark episode of the pest-house, stands in my memory as rather an interesting event, partly because there was something strange and romantic about it, and partly because it is the office of the imagination to gild with sunshine even the clouds of the past.

In all this, my experience was in no way peculiar: I was but a representation of childhood in all countries and ages. I do not forget the instances in which children are subjected to misfortune, nor the moral obliquity which is in every childish heart. But making due allowance for the shadows thus cast upon the spring of life, its general current is such as I have described.

## LETTER VI.

*The Inner Life of Towns—Physical Aspect and Character of Ridgefield—Effects of Cultivation upon Climate—Energetic Character of the First Settlers of Ridgefield—Classes of the People as to Descent—Their Occupations—Newspapers—Position of my Father's Family—Management of the Farm—Domestic Economy—Mechanical Professions—Beef and Pork—The Thanksgiving Turkey—Bread—Fuel—Flint and Steel—Friction Matches—Prof. Silliman—Pyroligneous Acid—Maple Sugar—Rum—Dram-drinking—Tansey Bitters—Brandy—Whisky—The First "Still"—Wine—Dr. G.'s Sacramental Wine—Domestic Products—Bread and Butter—Linen and Woolen Cloth—Cotton—Flax and Wool—The Little Spinning-wheel—Sally St. John and the Rat-trap—Manufacture of Wool—Molly Gregory and Fuging Tunes—The Tanner and Hatter—The Revolving Shoemaker—Whipping the Cut—Carpets—Coverlids and Quiltings—Village Bees and Raisings—The Meeting-house that was destroyed by Lightning—Deaconing a Hymn.*

MY DEAR C\*\*\*\*\*

It will be no new suggestion to a reflecting man like yourself, that towns, as well as men, have their inner and their outer life. There is a striking difference in one respect, between the two subjects; the age of man is set at threescore years and ten, while towns seldom die. The pendulum of human life vibrates by seconds, that of towns by centuries. The history of cities, the focal points of society, may be duly chronicled even to their minutest incidents; but cities do not constitute nations; the mass of almost every country is in the smaller towns and villages. The outer life of these is vaguely jotted down

in the census, and reported in the Gazetteers; but their inner life, which comprises the condition and progress of the community at large, is seldom written. We may see glimpses of it in occasional sermons, in special biographies, in genealogical memoranda. We may take periods of fifty years, and deduce certain general inferences from statistical tables of births and deaths; but still, the living men and manners as they rise in a country town, are seldom portrayed. I am therefore tempted to give you a rapid sketch of Ridgefield and of the people—how they lived, thought, and felt, at the beginning of the present century. It will serve as an example of rustic life throughout New England, fifty years ago, and it will moreover enable me, by contrasting this state of things with what I found to exist many years after, to show the steady, though silent, and perhaps unnoted progress of society among us.

From what I have already said, you will easily imagine the prominent physical characteristics and aspect of my native town—a general mass of hills, rising up in a crescent of low mountains, and commanding a wide view on every side. The soil was naturally hard, and thickly sown with stones of every size, from the immovable rock to the pebble. The fields, at this time, were divided by rude stone walls, and the surface of most was dotted with gathered heaps of stones and rocks, thus clearing spaces for cultivation, yet leaving a large portion of

the land still encumbered with its original curse. The climate was severe, on account of the elevation of the site, yet this was perhaps fully compensated by a corresponding salubrity.

I may add, in passing, that the climate of New England generally, has been mitigated within the last fifty years by the changes which civilization has wrought on the surface of the country—the felling of forests, the draining of marshes, the cultivation of the soil, and other similar causes—to an extent not generally appreciated. A person who has not made observations for a long period of time, is hardly aware of these mutations—effected by a growing and industrious agricultural community, even in the sterner features of nature. This may, however, be easily appreciated, if one will compare a district of country covered with its original forests, and converted into one vast sponge by its thick coating of weeds, shrubs, mosses, and decayed wood—the accumulations of centuries—thus making the hills and valleys a universal swamp, hoarding the rains of summer, and treasuring the snows of winter—with the same district, cleared of its trees, its soil turned up by the plow to the sun, and its waste waters carried off by roads and drains. Such a process over a whole country, is evidently sufficient to affect its temperature, and materially to modify its climate. I know many tracts of land, which, fifty years ago, were reeking with moisture, their surface defying cultivation by the



plow, and their roads impassable a great part of the year by means of the accumulation of water in the soil—now covered with houses, gardens, and corn-fields, and all the result of the slow but transforming processes bestowed by man upon every country which he subjects to cultivation. Nature is like man himself—rude in his aspect and severe in his temper, until softened and subdued by civilization. Our New England, two centuries ago, was, like its inhabitants, bleak and wild to the view, harsh and merciless in its climate: the change of these is analogous to the change which has been effected by substituting towns and villages for wigwams, and Christian man for the savage.

Yet despite the somewhat forbidding nature of the soil and climate of Ridgefield, it may be regarded as presenting a favorable example of New England country life and society, at the beginning of the present century. The town was originally settled by a sturdy race of men, mostly the immediate descendants of English emigrants, some from Norwalk and some from Milford. Their migration over an intervening space of savage hills, rocks, and ravines, into a territory so forbidding, and their speedy conversion of this into a thriving and smiling village, are witnesses to their courage and energy. The names which they bore, and which have been disseminated over the Union—Benedicts, Olmsteads, Northups, Keelers, Hoyts, Nashes, Dauceys, Meads, Hawleys—are no

less significant of the vigor and manliness of the stock to which they belonged.

At the time referred to, the date of my earliest recollection, the society of Ridgefield was exclusively English, and the manners and customs such as might have been expected, under the modifying influence of existing circumstances. I remember but one Irishman, one negro, and one Indian in the town. The first had begged and blarneyed his way from Long Island, where he had been wrecked; the second was a liberated slave; and the last was the vestige of a tribe, which dwelt of yore in a swampy tract, the name of which I have forgotten. We had a professed beggar, called Jagger, who had served in the armies of more than one of the Georges, and insisted upon crying "God save the king!" even on the 4th of July, and when openly threatened by the boys with a gratuitous ride on a rail. We had one settled pauper, Mrs. Yabacomb, who, for the first dozen years of my life, was my standard type for the witch of Endor.

Nearly all the inhabitants of Ridgefield were farmers, with the few mechanics that were necessary to carry on society in a somewhat primeval state. Even the persons not professionally devoted to agriculture, had each his farm, or at least his garden and home lot, with his pigs, poultry, and cattle. The population might have been 1200, comprising two hundred families. All could read and write, but in point

of fact, beyond the Almanac and Watts' Psalms and Hymns, their literary acquirements had little scope. There were, I think, four newspapers, all weekly, published in the State: one at Hartford, one at New London, one at New Haven, and one at Litchfield. There were, however, not more than three subscribers to all these in our village. We had, however, a public library of some two hundred volumes, and what was of equal consequence—the town was on the road which was then the great thoroughfare, connecting Boston with New York, and hence it had means of intelligence from travelers constantly passing through the place, which kept it up with the march of events.

If Ridgefield was thus rather above the average of Connecticut villages in its range of civilization, I suppose the circumstances and modes of life in my father's family, were somewhat above those of most people around us. We had a farm of forty acres, with four cows, two horses, and some two dozen sheep, to which may be added a stock of poultry, including a flock of geese. My father carried on the farm, besides preaching two sermons a week, and attending to other parochial duties—visiting the sick, attending funerals, solemnizing marriages, &c. He personally laid out the beds and planted the garden, he pruned the fruit-trees, and worked with the men in the meadow in the press of haying-time. He generally cut the corn-stalks himself, and always shelled the ears; the latter being done by drawing

them across the handle of the frying-pan, fastened over a wash-tub. I was sometimes permitted, as an indulgence, to spell my father in this, which was a favorite employment. With these and a few other exceptions, our agricultural operations were carried on by hired help.

It may seem that I should have passed over these somewhat commonplace passages in my father's life, but my judgment teaches me otherwise. There is good example and good argument in behalf of these labors of the garden and the field, even in a professional man. Not to cite Achilles and Abraham, who slaughtered their own mutton, and Cincinnatus, who held his own plow, it was the custom in New England, at the time I speak of, for country lawyers, physicians, clergymen—even Doctors of Divinity, to partake of these homespun labors. In the library of the Atheneum at Hartford, is a collection of Almanacs, formerly belonging to John Cotton Smith—one of the most elegant and accomplished men of his time—a distinguished member of Congress, Judge of the Superior Court, and several years Governor of the State. In looking it over, I observed such notes as the following, made with his own hand: "cut my barley," "began rye harvest," "planted field of potatoes," &c.; thus showing his personal attention to, if not his participation in, the affairs of the farm.\*

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\* See a further notice of Gov. Smith, page 551.

Nearly all the judges of the Superior Court occasionally worked in the field, in these hearty old federal times.

Whether these facts may be connected with others, which I am about to state, is a question I leave for doctors to determine. Certain it is that at this period professional men had good health and good digestion: no clergyman was known to have bronchitis. I seldom heard of dyspepsia, bodily or mental, during the existence of the Charter of Charles II. There is a pretty common notion in the United States, that Jefferson infused a general demagogism into this country, which percolated through the blood and bone of society, and set everybody in some way or other, to flattering the masses. It is certain that about this time, not only the politician, but the preacher, the lawyer, the editor, the author, all took to talking, speech-making, lecturing in a new way, in a new sense—that is, so as to seduce the multitude. Thus was ushered in the Age of Talk, which soon grew into a rage. The mania kept pace with democracy, and democracy with the mania; and at last, at the end of this national flatulence, the world grew light-headed, and forth came a spawn of isms, which no man can number. Under the influence of this advent of new notions, some took to cold water and some to mint-juleps; some to raw vegetables and some to hot slings. All agonized in one way or another. Every thing grew intense: politics swam with pota-

tions; religion got mixed up with transcendentalism; until at last, professors took to table-turning and judges to spirit-rappings. Now I do not say that all this is a sequence of logical deductions: that spiritualism is to be fathered upon Thomas Jefferson: what I affirm is, that demagogism and democracy, dyspepsia and transcendentalism, vegetarianism and spiritualism, have all come up, one after another, since old federalism went down! If it is any object to cure mankind of these vapors, I recommend that we all go back to the habits of other days, in which ministers, judges and governors wrought occasionally in the field.

But I return to Ridgefield. The household, as well as political, economy of these days lay in this, that every family lived as much as possible within itself. Money was scarce, wages being about fifty cents a day, though these were generally paid in meat, vegetables, and other articles of use — seldom in money. There was not a factory of any kind in the place.\* There was a butcher, but he only went from house to house to slaughter the cattle and swine of his neighbors. There was a tanner, but he only dressed other people's skins: there was a clothier, but he generally fulled and dressed other people's cloth. All this is typical of the mechanical opera-

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\* I recollect, as an after-thought, one exception. There was a hatter who supplied the town; but he generally made hats to order, and usually in exchange for the skins of foxes, rabbits, muskrats, and other chance peltry. I frequently purchased my powder and shot from the proceeds of skins which I sold him.

tions of the place. Even dyeing blue a portion of the wool, so as to make linsey-woolsey for short gowns, aprons, and blue-mixed stockings—vital necessities in those days—was a domestic operation. During the autumn, a dye-tub in the chimney corner—thus placed so as to be cherished by the genial heat—was as familiar in all thrifty houses, as the Bible or the back-log. It was covered with a board, and formed a cosy seat in the wide-mouthed fireplace, especially of a chill evening. When the night had waned, and the family had retired, it frequently became the anxious seat of the lover, who was permitted to carry on his courtship, the object of his addresses sitting demurely in the opposite corner. Some of the first families in Connecticut, I suspect, could their full annals be written, would find their foundations to have been laid in these chimney-corner courtships.

Being thus exposed, this institution of the dye-tub was the frequent subject of distressing and exciting accidents. Among the early, indelible incidents in my memory, happening to all vigorous characters, turning this over is one of the most prominent. Nothing so roused the indignation of thrifty housewives, for besides the ignominious avalanche of blue upon the floor, there was an infernal appeal made to another sense than that of sight. Every youth of parts was laden with experience in this way. I have a vague impression that Philip N..., while courting



H.... M..., was suspended for six weeks, for one of these mischances. If it was not he, it was some other spark of that generation.

To this general system of domestic economy our family was not an exception. Every autumn, it was a matter of course that we had a fat ox or a fat cow, ready for slaughter. One full barrel was salted down; the hams were cut out, slightly salted, and hung up in the chimney for a few days, and thus became "dried" or "hung beef," then as essential as the staff of life. Pork was managed in a similar way, though even on a larger scale, for two barrels were indispensable. A few pieces, as the spare-ribs, &c., were distributed to the neighbors, who paid in kind when they killed their swine.

Mutton and poultry came in their turn, all from our own stock, save that on Thanksgiving-day some of the magnates gave the parson a turkey. This, let me observe, in those good old times, was a bird of mark; no timid, crouching biped, with downcast head and pallid countenance, but stalking like a lord, and having wattles red as a "banner bathed in slaughter." His beard, or in modern parlance, his *goat*, without the aid of gum and black-ball, was so long, shining, and wiry, that it might have provoked the envy of his modern human rival in foppery. There was, in fact, something of the genius of the native bird still in him, for though the race was nearly extinct, a few wild flocks lingered in the remote

woods. Occasionally in the depth of winter, and along to the early spring, these stole to the barnyard, and held communion with their civilized compatriots. Severe battles ensued among the leaders for the favors of the fair, and as the wild cocks always conquered, the vigor of the race was kept up.

Our bread was of rye, tinged with Indian meal. Wheat bread was reserved for the sacrament and company; a proof not of its superiority, but of its scarcity and consequent estimation. All the vegetables came from our garden and farm. The fuel was supplied by our own woods—sweet-scented hickory, snapping chestnut, odoriferous oak, and reeking, fizzling ash—the hot juice of the latter, by the way, being a sovereign antidote for the ear-ache. These were laid in huge piles, all alive with sap, on the tall, gaunt andirons. You might have thought you heard John Rogers and his family at the stake, by their plaintive simmerings. The building of a fire was a real architectural achievement, favored by the wide yawning fireplace, and was always begun by daybreak. There was first a back-log, from fifteen to four and twenty inches in diameter and five feet long, imbedded in the ashes; then came a top log; then a fore stick; then a middle stick, and then a heap of kindlings, reaching from the bowels down to the bottom. A-top of all was a pyramid of smaller fragments, artfully adjusted, with spaces for the blaze.

Friction matches had not then been sent from the

regions of brimstone, to enable every boy or beggar to carry a conflagration in his pocket. If there were no coals left from the last night's fire, and none to be borrowed from the neighbors, resort was had to flint, steel, and tinder-box. Often, when the flint was dull, and the steel soft, and the tinder damp, the striking of fire was a task requiring both energy and patience. If the edifice on the andirons was skilfully constructed, the spark being applied, there was soon a furious stinging smoke, which Silliman told the world some years after, consisted mainly of pyroligneous acid. Nevertheless, in utter ignorance of this philosophical fact, the forked flame soon began to lick the sweating sticks above, and by the time the family had arisen, and assembled in the "keeping room," there was a roaring blaze, which defied even the bitter blasts of winter—and which, by the way, found abundant admittance through the crannies of the doors and windows. To feed the family fire in those days, during the severe season, was fully one man's work.

But to go on with our household history. Sugar was partially supplied by our maple-trees. These were tapped in March, the sap being collected, and boiled down in the woods. This was wholly a domestic operation, and one in which all the children rejoiced, each taking his privilege of an occasional sip or dip, from the period of the limpid sap, to the granulated condiment. Nevertheless, the chief supply of sugar was from the West Indies.

Rum was largely consumed, but our distilleries had scarcely begun. A half-pint of it was given as a matter of course to every day-laborer, more particularly in the summer season. In all families, rich or poor, it was offered to male visitors as an essential point of hospitality, or even good manners. Women—I beg pardon—ladies, took their schnapps, then named “Hopkins’ Elixir,” which was the most delicious and seductive means of getting tipsy that has been invented. Crying babies were silenced with hot toddy, then esteemed an infallible remedy for wind on the stomach. Every man imbibed his morning dram, and this was esteemed temperance. There is a story of a preacher about those days, who thus lectured his parish: “I say nothing, my beloved brethren, against taking a little bitters before breakfast, and after breakfast, especially if you are used to it. What I contend against is this dramming, dramming, dramming, at all hours of the day. There are some men who take a glass at eleven o’clock in the forenoon, and at four in the afternoon. I do not purpose to contend against old established customs, my brethren, rendered respectable by time and authority; but this dramming, dramming, is a crying sin in the land.”

However absurd this may seem now, it was not then very wide of the public sentiment. Huxham’s tincture was largely prescribed by the physicians. Tansey bitters were esteemed a sort of panacea,

moral as well as physical, for even the morning prayer went up heavily without it. The place of Stoughton—for this mixture was not then invented—was supplied by a tuft of tansey which Providence seemed to place somewhere in every man's garden or home lot.

As to brandy, I scarcely heard of it, so far as I can recollect, till I was sixteen years old, and as apprentice in a country store, was called upon to sell it. Cider was the universal table beverage. Cider brandy and whisky were soon after evoked from the infernal caldron of evil spirits. I remember, in my boyhood, to have seen a strange, zigzag tin tube, denominated a "still," belonging to one of our neighbors, converting, drop by drop, certain innocent liquids into the infernal fire-water. But, in the days I speak of, French brandy was rather confined to the houses of the rich, and to the drug shop.

Wine in our country towns was then almost exclusively used for the sacrament. I remember to have heard a story of these days, which is suggestive. The Rev. Dr. G . . . . of J . . . . had a brother who had lived some years in France, and was familiar with the wines of that country. On a certain occasion, he dined with his clerical brother, who after dinner gave him a glass of this beverage. The visitor having tasted it, shrugged his shoulders, and made wry faces.

"Where did you get this liquor, brother?" said he.

“Why it is some that was left over from the sacrament, and my deacons sent it to me.”

“I don’t wonder, brother,” was the reply, “that your church is so small, now that I know what wine you give them.”

There was, of course, no baker in Ridgefield; each family not only made its own bread, cakes, and pies, but their own soap, candles, butter, cheese, and the like. The fabrication of cloth, linen, and woolen was no less a domestic operation. Cotton—that is, raw cotton—was then wholly unknown among us at the North, except as a mere curiosity, produced somewhere in the tropics; but whether it grew on a plant, or an animal, was not clearly settled in the public mind.

We raised our own flax, rotted it, hackled it, dressed it, and spun it. The little wheel, turned by the foot, had its place, and was as familiar as if it had been a member of the family. How often have I seen my mother, and my grandmother too, sit down to it—though this, as I remember, was for the purpose of spinning some finer kind of thread—the burden of the spinning being done by a neighbor of ours, Sally St. John. By the way, she was a good-hearted, cheerful old maid, who petted me beyond my deserts. I grieve to say, that I repaid her partiality by many mischievous pranks, for which I should have been roundly punished, had not the good creature, like charity, covered a multitude of sins. I did indeed

get filliped for catching her foot one day in a steel-trap, but I declare that I was innocent of malice pre-pense, inasmuch as I had set the trap for a rat instead of the said Sally. Nevertheless, the verdict was against me, not wholly because of my misdemeanor in this particular instance, but partly upon the general theory that if I did not deserve punishment for that, I had deserved it, and should deserve it for something else, and so it was safe to administer it.

The wool was also spun in the family, partly by my sisters, and partly by Molly Gregory, daughter of our neighbor, the town carpenter. I remember her well as she sang and spun aloft in the attic. In those days, church singing was one of the fine arts—the only one, indeed, which flourished in Ridgefield, except the music of the drum and fife. The choir was divided into four parts, ranged on three sides of the meeting-house gallery. The tenor, led by Deacon Hawley, was in front of the pulpit, the base to the left, and the treble and counter to the right\*—the whole being set in motion by a pitch-pipe, made by the deacon himself, who was a cabinet-maker. Molly took upon herself the entire counter, for she had excellent lungs. The fugging tunes, which had then run a little mad, were her delight, and of all these, Montgomery was the general favorite. In her solitary operations aloft, I have often heard

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\* This separation of a choir is seldom practiced now in our churches, but was in general use at this period.



her send forth from the attic windows, the droning hum of her wheel, with fitful snatches of a hymn, in which the base began, the tenor followed, then the treble, and finally, the counter—winding up with irresistible pathos. Molly singing to herself, and all unconscious of eavesdroppers, carried on all the parts, thus :

*Base.* “Long for a cooling—

*Tenor.* “Long for a cooling—

*Treble.* “Long for a cooling—

*Counter.* “Long for a cooling stream at hand,  
And they must drink or die !”

The knitting of stockings was performed by the female part of the family in the evening, and especially at tea parties. According to the theory of society in that golden age, this was a moral as well as an economical employment, inasmuch as Satan was held to find

“Some mischief still  
For idle hands to do.”

Satan, however, dodged the question, for if the hands were occupied, the tongue was loose ; and it was said that in some families, he kept them well occupied with idle gossip. At all events, pianos, chessboards, graces, battledoors, and shuttlecocks, with other safety-valves of the kind, were only known by the hearing of the ear, as belonging to some such Vanity Fair as New York or Boston.

The weaving of cloth—linen, as well as woolen—was performed by an itinerant workman, who came to the house, put up his loom, and threw his shuttle, till the season's work was done. The linen was bleached, and made up by the family; the woolen cloth was sent to the fuller to be dyed and dressed. Twice a year, that is, in the spring and autumn, the tailor came to the house and fabricated the semi-annual stock of clothes for the male members—this being called “whipping the cat.”

Mantuumakers and milliners came in their turn, to fit out the female members of the family. There was a similar process as to boots and shoes. We sent the hides of the cattle—cows and calves we had killed—to the tanner, and these came back in assorted leather. Occasionally a little morocco, then wholly a foreign manufacture, was bought at the store, and made up for the ladies' best shoes. Amby Benedict, the circulating shoemaker, upon due notice, came with his bench, lapstone, and awls, and converted some little room into a shop, till the household was duly shod. He was a merry fellow, and threw in lots of singing gratis. He played all the popular airs upon his lapstone—as hurdygurdies and hand-organs do now.

Carpets were then only known in a few families, and were confined to the keeping-room and parlor. They were all home-made: the warp consisting of woolen yarn, and the woof of lists and old woolen

cloth, cut into strips, and sewed together at the ends. Coverlids generally consisted of quilts, made of pieces of waste calico, elaborately sewed together in octagons, and quilted in rectangles, giving the whole a gay and rich appearance. This process of quilting generally brought together the women of the neighborhood, married and single, and a great time they had of it—what with tea, talk, and stitching. In the evening, the beaux were admitted, so that a quilting was a real festival, not unfrequently getting young people into entanglements which matrimony alone could unravel.

I am here reminded of a sort of communism or socialism which prevailed in our rural districts long before Owen or Fourier was born. If some old Arcadian of the golden age had written his life, as I now write mine, I have no doubt that it would have appeared that this system existed then and there, and that these pretended inventors were mere imitators. At all events, at Ridgefield we used to have “stone bees,” when all the men of a village or hamlet came together with their draft cattle, and united to clear some patch of earth which had been stigmatized by nature with an undue visitation of stones and rocks. All this labor was gratuitously rendered, save only that the proprietor of the land furnished the grog. Such a meeting was always of course a very social and sociable affair. When the work was done, gymnastic exercises—such as hopping, wrestling, and foot-

racing—took place among the athletic young men. My father generally attended these celebrations as a looker-on. It was indeed the custom for the clergy of the olden time, to mingle with the people, even in their labors and their pastimes. For some reason or other, it seemed that things went better when the parson gave them his countenance. I followed my father's example, and attended these cheerful and beneficial gatherings. Most of the boys of the town did the same. I may add that, if I may trust the traditions of Ridgefield, the cellar of our new house was dug by a *bee* in a single day, and that was Christmas.

House-raising and barn-raising, the framework being always of wood, were done in the same way by a neighborly gathering of the people. I remember an anecdote of a church-raising, which I may as well relate here. In the eastern part of the State, I think at Lyme, or Pautipaug, a meeting-house was destroyed by lightning. After a year or two, the society mustered its energies, and raised the frame of another on the site of the old one. It stood about six months, and was then blown over.

In due time, another frame was prepared, and the neighborhood gathered together to raise it. It was now proposed by Deacon Hart that they should commence the performances by a prayer and hymn, it having been suggested that perhaps the want of these pious preliminaries on former occasions, had something to

do with the calamitous results which attended them. When all was ready, therefore, a prayer was made, and the chorister of the place deaconed\* the first two lines of the hymn thus:

“ If God to build the house deny,  
The builders work in vain.”

This being sung, the chorister completed the verse thus, adapting the lines to the occasion :

“ Unless the Lord doth shingle it,  
It will blow down agin !”

I must not fail to give you a portrait of one of our village homes—of the middle class—at this era. I take as an example that of our neighbor, J..... B.... who had been a tailor, but having thriven in his affairs, and now advanced to the age of some fifty years, had become a farmer—such a career, by the way, being common at the time ; for the prudent mechanic, adding to his house and his lands, as his necessities and his thrift dictated, usually ended as the proprietor of an ample house, fifty to a hundred acres of land, and an ample barn, stocked with half

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\* Deaconing a hymn or psalm, was adopted on occasions when there was but a single book, or perhaps but one or two books, at hand—a circumstance more common fifty years ago, when singing-books were scarce, than at present, when books of all kinds render food for the mind as cheap and abundant as that for the body. In such cases, the leader of the choir, or the deacon, or some other person, read a verse, or perhaps two lines of a hymn, which being sung, other stanzas were read, and then sung in the same way.

a dozen cows, one or two horses, a flock of sheep, and a general assortment of poultry.

The home of this, our neighbor B . . . . , was situated on the road leading to Salem, there being a wide space in front occupied by the wood-pile, which in these days was not only a matter of great importance, but of formidable bulk. The size of the wood-pile was indeed in some sort an index to the rank and condition of the proprietor. The house itself was a low edifice, forty feet long, and of two stories in front; the rear being what was called a *breakback*, that is, sloping down to a height of ten feet; this low part furnishing a shelter for garden tools, and various household instruments. The whole was constructed of wood; the outside being of the dun complexion assumed by unpainted wood, exposed to the weather for twenty or thirty years, save only that the roof was tinged of a reddish-brown by a fine moss that found sustenance in the chestnut shingles.

To the left was the garden, which in the productive season was a wilderness of onions, squashes, cucumbers, beets, parsnips, and currants, with the never-failing tansey for bitters, horseradish for seasoning, and fennel for keeping old women awake in church time. A sprig of fennel was in fact the theological smelling-bottle of the tender sex, and not unfrequently of the men, who, from long sitting in the sanctuary—after a week of labor in the field—found themselves too strongly tempted to visit the forbidden

land of Nod—would sometimes borrow a sprig of fennel, and exorcise the fiend that threatened their spiritual welfare.

The interior of the house presented a parlor with plain, whitewashed walls, a home-made carpet upon the floor, calico curtains at the window, and a mirror three feet by two against the side, with a mahogany frame: to these must be added eight chairs and a cherry table, of the manufacture of Deacon Hawley. The keeping or sitting room had also a carpet, a dozen rush-bottom chairs, a table, &c. The kitchen was large—fully twenty feet square, with a fireplace six feet wide and four feet deep. On one side, it looked out upon the garden, the squashes and cucumbers climbing up and forming festoons over the door; on the other a view was presented of the orchard, embracing first a circle of peaches, pears, and plums, and beyond, a wide-spread clover field, embowered with apple-trees. Just by, was the well, with its tall sweep, the old oaken bucket dangling from the pole. The kitchen was in fact the most comfortable room in the house; cool in summer, and perfumed with the breath of the garden and the orchard: in winter, with its roaring blaze of hickory, it was a cosy resort, defying the bitterest blasts of the season. Here the whole family assembled at meals, save only when the presence of company made it proper to serve tea in the parlor.

The chambers were all without carpets, and the



furniture was generally of a simple character. The beds, however, were of ample size, and well filled with geese feathers, these being deemed essential for comfortable people. I must say, by the way, that every decent family had its flock of geese, of course, which was picked thrice a year, despite the noisy remonstrances of both goose and gander. The sheets of the bed, though of home-made linen, were as white as the driven snow. Indeed, the beds of this era showed that sleep was a luxury, well understood and duly cherished by all classes. The cellar, extending under the whole house, was a vast receptacle, and by no means the least important part of the establishment. In the autumn, it was supplied with three barrels of beef and as many of pork, twenty barrels of cider, with numerous bins of potatoes, turnips, beets, carrots, and cabbages. The garret, which was of huge dimensions, at the same time displayed a labyrinth of dried pumpkins, peaches, and apples—hung in festoons upon the rafters, amid bunches of summer savory, boneset, fennel, and other herbs—the floor being occupied by heaps of wool, flax, tow, and the like.

The barn corresponded to the house. It was a low brown structure, having abundance of sheds built on to it, without the least regard to symmetry. I need not say it was well stocked with hay, oats, rye, and buckwheat. Six cows, one or two horses, three dozen sheep, and an ample supply of poultry, including two

or three broods of turkeys, constituted its living tenants.

The farm I need not describe in detail, but the orchard must not be overlooked. This consisted of three acres, covered, as I have said, with apple-trees, yielding abundantly—as well for the cider-mill as for the table, including the indispensable winter apple-sauce—according to their kinds. In the spring, an apple orchard is one of the most beautiful objects in the world. No tree or shrub presents a bloom at once so gorgeous, and so fragrant. Just at this time it is the paradise of the bees and the birds—the former filling the air with their gentle murmurs, and the latter celebrating their nuptials with all the frolic and fun of a universal jubilee. How often have I ventured into Uncle Josey's ample orchard at this joyous season, and stood entranced among the robins, blackbirds, woodpeckers, bluebirds, jays, and orioles,—all seeming to me like playmates, racing, chasing, singing, rollicking, in the exuberance of their joy, or perchance slyly pursuing their courtships, or even more slyly building their nests, and rearing their young.

The inmates of the house I need not describe, further than to say that Uncle Josey himself was a little deaf, and of moderate capacity, yet he lived to good account, for he reared a large family, and was gathered to his fathers at a good old age, leaving behind him a handsome estate, a fair name, and a safe

example. His wife, who spent her early life at service in a kitchen, was a handsome, lively, efficient woman, mother of a large and prosperous family, and a universal favorite in the neighborhood. She is still living in a green old age, with several generations of descendants, who call down blessings on her name.

This is the homely picture of a Ridgefield farmer's home, half a century ago. There were other establishments more extensive and more sumptuous in the town, as there were others also of an inferior grade. Yet this was a fair sample of the houses, barns, and farms of the middle class—the majority of the people. Since then the times have changed, as I shall hereafter show : the general standard of living has in all things improved ; but still the same elements of thrift, economy, piety, prudence, and progress are visible on every side. Uncle Josey's house is still standing ; its exterior shows no coat of paint, but the interior displays Kidderminster carpets—made at Enfield or Lowell—mahogany bureaus, gilt looking-glasses, and a small well-filled mahogany bookcase.

## LETTER VII.

*Domestic Habits of the People—Meals—Servants and Masters—Dress—Amusements—Festivals—Marriages—Funerals—Dancing—Winter Sports—Up and Down—My Two Grandmothers.*

MY DEAR C\*\*\*\*\*

You will gather from my preceding letter, some ideas of the household industry and occupations of country people in Connecticut, at the beginning of the present century. Their manners, in other respects, had a corresponding stamp of homeliness and simplicity.

In most families, the first exercise of the morning was reading the Bible, followed by a prayer, at which all were assembled, including the servants and helpers of the kitchen and the farm. Then came the breakfast, which was a substantial meal, always including hot viands, with vegetables, apple-sauce, pickles, mustard, horseradish, and various other condiments. Cider was the common drink for laboring people; even children drank it at will. Tea was common, but not so general as now. Coffee was almost unknown. Dinner was a still more hearty and varied repast—characterized by abundance of garden vegetables; tea was a light supper.

The day began early: breakfast was had at six in summer and seven in winter; dinner at noon—the

work people in the fields being called to their meals by a conch-shell, usually winded by some kitchen Triton. The echoing of this noon-tide horn, from farm to farm, and over hill and dale, was a species of music which even rivaled the popular melody of drum and fife. Tea—the evening meal, usually took place about sundown. In families where all were laborers, all sat at table, servants as well as masters—the food being served before sitting down. In families where the masters and mistresses did not share the labors of the household or the farm, the meals of the domestics were had separate. There was, however, in those days a perfectly good understanding and good feeling between the masters and servants. The latter were not Irish; they had not as yet imbibed the plebeian envy of those above them, which has since so generally embittered and embarrassed American domestic life. The terms democrat and aristocrat had not got into use: these distinctions, and the feelings now implied by them, had indeed no existence in the hearts of the people. Our servants, during all my early life, were of the neighborhood, generally the daughters of respectable farmers and mechanics, and respecting others, were themselves respected and cherished. They were devoted to the interests of the family, and were always relied upon and treated as friends. In health, they had the same food; in sickness, the same care as the masters and mistresses or their children. This servitude implied no degra-

dation, because it did not degrade the heart or manners of those subjected to it. It was never thought of as a reproach to a man or woman—in the stations they afterwards filled—that he or she had been out to service. If servitude has since become associated with debasement, it is only because servants themselves, under the bad guidance of demagogues, have lowered their calling by low feelings and low manners.

At the period of my earliest recollections, men of all classes were dressed in long, broad-tailed coats, with huge pockets, long waistcoats, and breeches. Hats had low crowns, with broad brims—some so wide as to be supported at the sides with cords. The stockings of the parson, and a few others, were of silk in summer and worsted in winter; those of the people were generally of wool, and blue and gray mixed. Women dressed in wide bonnets—sometimes of straw and sometimes of silk: the gowns were of silk, muslin, gingham, &c.—generally close and short-waisted, the breast and shoulders being covered by a full muslin kerchief. Girls ornamented themselves with a large white Vandyke. On the whole, the dress of both men and women has greatly changed. As to the former, short, snug, close-fitting garments have succeeded to the loose latitudinarian coats of former times: stove-pipe hats have followed broad brims, and pantaloons have taken the place of breeches. With the other sex—little French bon-

nets, set round with glowing flowers, flourish in the place of the plain, yawning hats of yore ; then it was as much an effort to make the waists short, as it is now to make them long. As to the hips, which now make so formidable a display—it seems to me that in the days I allude to, ladies had none to speak of.

The amusements were then much the same as at present—though some striking differences may be noted. Books and newspapers—which are now diffused even among the country towns, so as to be in the hands of all, young and old—were then scarce, and were read respectfully, and as if they were grave matters, demanding thought and attention. They were not toys and pastimes, taken up every day, and by everybody, in the short intervals of labor, and then hastily dismissed, like waste paper. The aged sat down when they read, and drew forth their spectacles, and put them deliberately and reverently upon the nose. These instruments were not as now, little tortoise-shell hooks, attached to a ribbon, and put off and on with a jerk ; but they were of silver or steel, substantially made, and calculated to hold on with a firm and steady grasp, showing the gravity of the uses to which they were devoted. Even the young approached a book with reverence, and a newspaper with awe. How the world has changed !

The two great festivals were Thanksgiving and ‘ training-day ’—the latter deriving, from the still lingering spirit of the revolutionary war, a decidedly



martial character. The marching of the troops, and the discharge of gunpowder, which invariably closed the exercises, were glorious and inspiring mementoes of heroic achievements, upon many a bloody field. The music of the drum and fife resounded on every side. A match between two rival drummers always drew an admiring crowd, and was in fact one of the chief excitements of the great day.

Tavern haunting—especially in winter, when there was little to do—for manufactures had not then sprung up to give profitable occupation, during this inclement season—was common, even with respectable farmers. Marriages were celebrated in the evening, at the house of the bride, with a general gathering of the neighborhood, and usually wound off by dancing. Everybody went, as to a public exhibition, without invitation. Funerals generally drew large processions, which proceeded to the grave. Here the minister always made an address, suited to the occasion. If there was any thing remarkable in the history of the deceased, it was turned to religious account in the next Sunday's sermon. Singing meetings, to practice church music, were a great resource for the young, in winter. Dances at private houses were common, and drew no reproaches from the sober people present. Balls at the taverns were frequented by the young; the children of deacons and ministers attended, though the parents did not. The winter brought sleighing, skating, and the usual round of indoor sports. In

general, the intercourse of all classes was kindly and considerate—no one arrogating superiority, and yet no one refusing to acknowledge it, where it existed. You would hardly have noticed that there was a higher and a lower class. Such there were certainly, for there must always and everywhere be the strong and the weak, the wise and the foolish—those of superior and those of inferior intellect, taste, manners, appearance, and character. But in our society, these existed without being felt as a privilege to one which must give offence to another. The feuds between Up and Down, which have since disturbed the whole fabric of society, had not then begun.

It may serve, in some degree, to throw light upon the manners and customs of this period, if I give you a sketch of my two grandmothers. Both were widows, and were well stricken in years, when they came to visit us at Ridgefield—about the year 1803 or 4. My grandmother Ely was of the old regime—a lady of the old school, and sustaining the character in her upright carriage, her long, tapering waist, and her high-heeled shoes. The costumes of Louis XV.'s time had prevailed in New York and Boston, and even at this period they still lingered there, in isolated cases, though the Revolution had generally exercised a transforming influence upon the toilet of both men and women. It is curious enough that at this moment—1855—the female attire of a century ago is revived; and in every black-eyed,

stately old lady, dressed in black silk, and showing her steel-gray hair beneath her cap, I can now see semblances of this, my maternal grandmother.

My other grandmother was in all things the opposite: short, fat, blue-eyed, practical, utilitarian. She was a good example of the country dame—hearty, homespun, familiar, full of strong sense and practical energy. I scarcely know which of the two I liked the best. The first sang me plaintive songs; told me stories of the Revolution—her husband, Col. Ely, having had a large and painful share in its vicissitudes; she described Gen. Washington, whom she had seen; and the French officers, Lafayette, Rochambeau, and others, who had been inmates of her house. She told me tales of even more ancient date, and recited poetry, generally consisting of ballads, which were suited to my taste. And all this lore was commended to me by a voice of inimitable tenderness, and a manner at once lofty and condescending. My other grandmother was not less kind, but she promoted my happiness and prosperity in another way. Instead of stories, she gave me bread and butter: in place of poetry, she fed me with apple-sauce and pie. Never was there a more hearty old lady: she had a firm conviction that children must be fed, and what she believed, she practiced.

## LETTER VIII.

*Interest in Mechanical Devices—Agriculture—My Parents Design me for a Carpenter—The Dawn of the Age of Invention—Fulton, &c.—Perpetual Motion—Whittling—Gentlemen—St. Paul, King Alfred, Daniel Webster, &c.—Desire of Improvement, a New England Characteristic—Hunting—The Bow and Arrow—The Fowling-piece—Pigeons—Anecdote of Parson M. . . .—Audubon and Wilson—The Passenger Pigeon—Sporting Rambles—The Blacksnake and Screech-owl—Fishing—Advantages of Country Life and Country Training.*

MY DEAR C \*\*\*\*\*

I can recollect with great vividness the interest I took in the domestic events I have described, and which circled with the seasons in our household at this period. I had no great interest in the operations of the farm. Plowing, hoeing, digging, seemed to me mere drudgery, imparting no instruction, and affording no scope for ingenuity or invention. I had not yet learned to contemplate agriculture in its economical aspect, nor had my mind yet risen to that still higher view of husbandry, which leads to a scientific study of the soil and the seasons, and teaches man to become a kind of second Providence to those portions of the earth which are subjected to his care.

The mechanical operations I have described, as well as others—especially those of the weaver and carpenter, on the contrary, stimulated my curiosity, and excited my emulation. Thus I soon became familiar with the tools of the latter, and made such windmills,

kites, and perpetual motions, as to extort the admiration of my playmates, and excite the respect of my parents, so that they seriously meditated putting me apprentice to a carpenter. Up to the age of fourteen, I think this was regarded as my manifest destiny. I certainly took great delight in mechanical devices, and became a celebrity on pine shingles with a pen-knife. It was a day of great endeavors among all inventive geniuses. Fulton was struggling to develop steam navigation, and other discoverers were thundering at the gates of knowledge, and seeking to unfold the wonders of art as well as of nature. It was, in fact, the very threshold of the era of steamboats, railroads, electric telegraphs, and a thousand other useful discoveries, which have since changed the face of the world. In this age of excitement, perpetual motion was the great hobby of aspiring mechanics, as it has been indeed ever since. I pondered and whittled intensely on this subject before I was ten years old. Despairing of reaching my object by mechanical means, I attempted to arrive at it by magnetism, my father having bought me a pair of horse-shoe magnets in one of his journeys to New Haven. I should have succeeded, had it not been a principle in the nature of this curious element, that no substance will instantly intercept the stream of attraction. I tried to change the poles, and turn the north against the south; but there too nature had headed me, and of course I failed.

A word, by the way, on the matter of whittling. This is generally represented as a sort of idle, fidgety, frivolous use of the penknife, and is set down by amiable foreigners and sketchers of American manners as a peculiar characteristic of our people. No portrait of an American is deemed complete, whether in the saloon or the senate-chamber, at home or on the highway, unless with penknife and shingle in hand. I feel not the slightest disposition to resent even this, among the thousand caricatures that pass for traits of American life. For my own part, I can testify that, during my youthful days, I found the penknife a source of great amusement and even of instruction. Many a long winter evening, many a dull, drizzly day, in spring and summer and autumn—sometimes at the kitchen fireside, sometimes in the attic, amid festoons of dried apples, peaches, and pumpkins; sometimes in a cosy nook of the barn; sometimes in the shelter of a neighboring stone-wall, thatched over with wild grape-vines—have I spent in great ecstasy, making candle-rods, or some other simple article of household goods, for my mother, or in perfecting toys for myself and my young friends, or perhaps in attempts at more ambitious achievements. This was not mere waste of time, mere idleness and dissipation. I was amused: that was something. Some of the pleasantest remembrances of my childhood carry me back to the scenes I have just indicated, when in happy solitude, absorbed in my me-



chanical devices, I still listened to the rain pattering upon the roof, or the wind roaring down the chimney—thus enjoying a double bliss—a pleasing occupation, with a conscious delight in my sense of security from the rage of the elements without.

Nay more—these occupations were instructive: my mind was stimulated to inquire into the mechanical powers, and my hand was educated to mechanical dexterity. Smile, if you please—but reflect! Why is it, that we in the United States surpass all other nations, in the excellence of our tools of all kinds? Why are our axes, knives, hoes, spades, plows, the best in the world? Because—in part, at least—we learn, in early life, this alphabet of mechanics theoretical and practical—*whittling*. Nearly every head and hand is trained to it. We know and feel the difference between dull and sharp tools. At ten years old, we are all epicures in cutting instruments. This is the beginning, and we go on, as a matter of course, toward perfection. The inventive head, and the skillful, executing hand, thus become general, national, characteristic among us.

I am perfectly aware that some people, in this country as well as others, despise labor, and especially manual labor, as ungenteeled. There are people in these United States who scoff at New England on account of this general use of thrifty, productive industry, among our people as a point of education. The gentleman, say these refined persons, must not



work. It is not easy to cite a higher example of a gentleman—in thought, feeling, and manner—than St. Paul, and he was a tent-maker: King Alfred was a gentleman, and he could turn his hand to servile labor. But let me refer to New England examples. Daniel Webster was a gentleman, and he began with the scythe and the plow; Abbot Lawrence was a gentleman, and he served through every grade, an apprenticeship to his profession; Timothy Dwight was a gentleman, and was trained to the positive labors of the farm; Franklin, the printer; Sherman, the shoemaker; Ellsworth, the teamster—all were gentlemen, and of that high order which regards truth, honor, manliness, as its essential basis. Nothing, in my view, is more despicable, nothing more calculated to diffuse and cherish a debasing effeminacy of body and soul, than the doctrine that labor is degrading. Where such ideas prevail, rottenness lies at the foundation of society.

But to go back to my theme. If you ask me why it is that this important institution of whittling is indigenous among us, I reply, that, in the first place, our country is full of a great variety of woods, suited to carpentry, many of them easily wrought, and thus inviting boyhood to try its hands upon them. In the next place, labor is dear, and therefore even children are led to supply themselves with toys, or perchance to furnish some of the simpler articles of use to the household. This dearness

of labor, moreover, furnishes a powerful stimulant to the production of labor-saving machines, and hence it is—through all these causes, co-operating one with another—that steam navigation, the electric telegraph, the steam reaper, &c., &c., are American inventions : hence it is that, whether it be at the World's Fair in London or Paris, we gain a greater proportion of prizes for useful inventions, than any other people. That is what comes of whittling !

There is no doubt another element to be considered in a close and philosophical view of what I state—this aptitude of our people, especially those of New England, for mechanical invention. The desire of improvement is inherent in the New England character. This springs from two principles : first, a moral sense, founded upon religious ideas, making it the duty of every man to seek constantly to be and do better, day by day, as he advances in life. This is the great main-spring, set in the heart by Puritanism. Its action reaches alike to time and to eternity. Mr. Webster well illustrated the New England character in this respect, when he describes his father as “shrinking from no toil, no sacrifice, to serve his country, and to raise his children to a condition better than his own.” This desire of improvement is indeed extended to the children, and animates the bosom of every parent.

The other principle I allude to is liberty, civil and social—actual and practical. New England is

probably the only country in the world, where every man, generally speaking, has or can have the means—that is, the money, the intelligence, the knowledge, the power—to choose his career; to say where he will live, what profession he will follow, what position he will occupy.

It is this moral sense, in every man's bosom, impelling him to seek improvement in all things, co-operating with this liberty, giving him the right and the ability to seek happiness in his own way—which forms this universal spirit of improvement—the distinguishing feature of the New England people. It is this which has conquered our savage climate, subdued the forests, and planted the whole country with smiling towns and villages: it is this which has established a system of universal education, cherished religion, promoted literature, founded benign institutions, perfected our political system, and abolished negro slavery, imposed upon us by the mother country.

It is easy to trace the operations of this principle in the humblest as well as the highest classes. The man at the plow is not a mere drudge: he is not like the debased subject of European despotism, a servile tool, an unthinking, unhoping, unaspiring animal, to use his muscles, without thought as to the result of his labor. Let me tell you an anecdote which will illustrate this matter. Some years ago, a young New Englander found himself in the back parts of Penn-

sylvania, ashore as to the means of living. In this strait he applied to a wealthy Quaker in the neighborhood for help.

"I will furnish thee with work, and pay thee for it, friend," said the Quaker; "but it is not my custom to give alms to one able to labor, like thee."

"Well, that's all I want," said the Yankee: "of course I am willing to work."

"What can thee do, friend?"

"Any thing. I will do any thing, to get a little money, to help me out of my difficulties."

"Well—there is a log yonder; and there is an axe. Thee may pound on the log with the head of the axe, and if thee is diligent and faithful, I will pay thee a dollar a day."

"Agreed: I'd as soon do that as any thing else."

And so the youth went to work, and pounded lustily with the head of the axe upon the log. After a time he paused to take breath; then he began again. But after half an hour he stopped, threw down the axe impatiently, and walked away, saying, "I'll be hanged if I'll cut wood without seeing the chips fly!"

Thus the Yankee laborer has a mind that must be contented: he looks to the result of his labor; and if his tools or implements are imperfect, his first impulse is to improve them, and finally to perfect them. In this endeavor, he is of course aided by the mechanical aptitude, to which I have already alluded; and hence it is, that not only our utensils, for every

species of common work, but our machines generally for the saving of labor, are thus excellent. With what painful sympathy have I seen the peasants in ingenious France and classic Italy sweating and toiling with uncouth, unhandy implements, which have undergone no improvement for a thousand years, and which abundantly bespeak the despotism which for that period has kept their minds as well as their bodies in bondage! You will not wonder that such observations have carried me back to my native New England, and taught me to appreciate the character and institutions of its people.

I must add, in descending from this lofty digression to my simpler story, that in these early days, I was a Nimrod, a mighty hunter—first with a bow and arrow, and afterward with the old hereditary firelock, which snapped six times and went off once. The smaller kinds of game were abundant. The thickets teemed with quails;\* partridges drummed in every wood; the gray-squirrel—the most picturesque animal of our forests—enlivened every hickory copse with his mocking laugh, his lively gambols, and his long bannered tail. The pigeons in spring and autumn migrated in countless flocks, and many lingered in our woods for the season.

Everybody was then a hunter, not of course a

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\* The American quail is a species of partridge, in size between the European quail and partridge. The *partridge* of New England is the *pheasant* of the South, and the *ruffed grouse* of the naturalists.

sportsman, for the chase was followed more for profit than for pastime. Game was, in point of fact, a substantial portion of the supply of food at certain seasons of the year. All were then good shots, and my father could not be an exception: he was even beyond his generation in netting pigeons. This was not deemed a reproach at that time in a clergyman, nor was he the only parson that indulged in these occupations. One day, as I was with him on West Mountain, baiting pigeons, we had seduced a flock of three or four dozen down into the bed where they were feeding—my father and myself lying concealed in our bush-hut, close by. Suddenly, whang went a gun into the middle of the flock! Out we ran in great indignation, for at least a dozen of the birds were bleeding and fluttering before us. Scarcely had we reached the spot, when we met Parson M.... of Lower Salem, who had thus unwittingly poached upon us. The two clergymen had first a flurry and then a good laugh, after which they divided the plunder and parted.

The stories told by Wilson and Audubon as to the amazing quantity of pigeons in the West, were realized by us in Connecticut half a century ago. I have seen a stream of these noble birds, pouring at brief intervals through the skies, from the rising to the setting sun, and this in the county of Fairfield. I may here add, that of all the pigeon tribe, this of our country—the passenger pigeon—is the swiftest and most



beautiful of a swift and beautiful generation. At the same time it is unquestionably superior to any other for the table. All the other species of the eastern as well as the western continent, which I have tasted, are soft and flavorless in comparison.

I can recollect no sports of my youth which equalled in excitement our pigeon hunts, generally taking place in September and October. We usually started on horseback before daylight, and made a rapid progress to some stubble-field on West Mountain. The ride in the keen, fresh air, especially as the dawn began to break, was delightful. The gradual encroachment of day upon the night, filled my mind with sublime images: the waking up of a world from sleep, the joyousness of birds and beasts in the return of morning, and my own sympathy in this cheerful and grateful homage of the heart to God, the Giver of good—all contributed to render these adventures most impressive upon my young heart. My memory is still full of the sights and sounds of those glorious mornings: the silvery whistle of the wings of migrating flocks of plover—invisible in the gray mists of dawn; the faint murmur of the distant mountain torrents; the sonorous gong of the long-trailing flocks of wild geese, seeming to come from the unseen depths of the skies—these were among the suggestive sounds that stole through the dim twilight. As morning advanced, the scene was inconceivably beautiful—the mountain sides, clothed in autumnal



green and purple and gold, rendered more glowing by the sunrise—with the valleys covered with mists and spreading out like lakes of silver; while on every side the ear was saluted by the mocking screams of the red-headed woodpecker, the cawing of congresses of crows, clamorous as if talking to Buncombe; and finally the rushing sound of the pigeons, pouring like a tide over the tops of the trees.

By this time of course our nets were ready, and our flyers and stool-birds on the alert. What moments of ecstasy were these, and especially when the head of the flock—some red-breasted old father or grandfather—caught the sight of our pigeons, and turning at the call, drew the whole train down into our net-bed. I have often seen a hundred, or two hundred of these splendid birds, come upon us, with a noise absolutely deafening, and sweeping the air with a sudden gust, like the breath of a thunder-cloud. Sometimes our bush-hut, where we lay concealed, was covered all over with pigeons, and we dared not move a finger, as their red, piercing eyes were upon us. When at last, with a sudden pull of the rope, the net was sprung, and we went out to secure our booty—often fifty, and sometimes even a hundred birds—I felt a fullness of triumph, which words are wholly inadequate to express!

Up to the age of eight years, I was never trusted with a gun. Whenever I went forth as a sportsman on my own account, it was only with a bow and arrow

If I failed in achievement, I made up for it in vivid feelings and imaginings. The intensity of my perceptions on these occasions, are among my most distinct recollections. Every bird that flew, every sound that trembled in the air, every copse and thicket, every hill and dale—every thing that my senses realized, my memory daguerreotyped. Afterward, when I arrived at the honors of shot-pouch and powder-horn, I roamed the country far and wide, over mountain and dell, with a similar vivacity of experience. My performances as a hunter were very moderate. In truth, I had a rickety old gun, that had belonged to my grandfather, and though it perhaps had done good service in the Revolution, or further back in the times of bears and wolves, it was now very decrepit, and all around the lock seemed to have the shaking palsy. Occasionally I met with adventures—half serious and half ludicrous. Once, in running my hand into a hole in a hollow tree, some twenty feet from the ground, being in search of a woodpecker, I hauled out a blacksnake. At another time, in a similar way, I had my fingers pretty sharply nipped by a screech-owl. My memory supplies me with numerous instances of this kind.

As to fishing, I never had a passion for it; I was too impatient. I had no enthusiasm for nibbles, and there were too many of these in proportion to the bites. I perhaps resembled a man by the name of Bennett, who joined the Shakers of New Canaan

about these days, but soon left them, declaring that the Spirit was too long in coming—"he could not wait." Nevertheless, I dreamed away some pleasant hours in angling in the brooks and ponds of my native town. I well remember that on my eighth birthday, I went four miles to Burt's mills, carrying on the old mare two bushels of rye. While my grist was grinding, I angled in the pond, and carried home enough for a generous meal.

Now all these things may seem trifles, yet in a review of my life, I deem them of some significance. This homely familiarity with the more mechanical arts was a material part of my education; this communion with nature gave me instructive and important lessons from nature's open book of knowledge. My technical education, as will be seen hereafter, was extremely narrow and irregular. This defect was at least partially supplied by the commonplace incidents I have mentioned. The teaching, or rather the training of the senses, in the country—ear and eye, foot and hand, by running, leaping, climbing over hill and mountain, by occasional labor in the garden and on the farm, and by the use of tools—and all this in youth, is sowing seed which is repaid largely and readily to the hand of after cultivation, however unskillful it may be. This is not so much because of the amount of knowledge available in after-life, which is thus obtained—though this is not to be despised—as it is that healthful, vigorous, manly habits and

associations — physical, moral, and intellectual — are thus established and developed.

It is a riddle to many people that the emigrants from the country into the city, in all ages, outstrip the natives, and become their masters. The reason is obvious: country education and country life are practical, and invigorating to body and mind, and hence those who are thus qualified triumph in the race of life. It has always been, it will always be so; the rustic Goths and Vandals will march in and conquer Rome, in the future, as they have done in the past. I say this, by no means insisting that my own life furnishes any very striking proof of the truth of my remarks; still, I may say that but for the country training and experience I have alluded to, and which served as a foothold for subsequent progress, I should have lingered in my career far behind the humble advances I have actually made.

Let me illustrate and verify my meaning by specific examples. In my youth I became familiar with every bird common to the country: I knew his call, his song, his hue, his food, his habits; in short, his natural history. I could detect him by his flight, as far as the eye could reach. I knew all the quadrupeds—wild as well as tame. I was acquainted with almost every tree, shrub, bush, and flower, indigenous to the country; not botanically, but according to popular ideas. I recognized them instantly, wherever I saw them; I knew their forms, hues, leaves,

blossoms, and fruit. I could tell their characteristics, their uses, the legends and traditions that belonged to them. All this I learned by familiarity with these objects; meeting with them in all my walks and rambles, and taking note of them with the emphasis and vigor of early experience and observation. In after days, I have never had time to make natural history a systematic study; yet my knowledge as to these things has constantly accumulated, and that without special effort. When I have traveled in other countries, the birds, the animals, the vegetation, have interested me as well by their resemblances as their differences, when compared with our own. In looking over the pages of scientific works on natural history, I have always read with the eagerness and intelligence of preparation; indeed, of vivid and pleasing associations. Every idea I had touching these matters was living and sympathetic, and beckoned other ideas to it, and these again originated still others. Thus it is that in the race of a busy life, by means of a homely, hearty start at the beginning, I have, as to these subjects, easily and naturally supplied, in some humble degree, the defects of my irregular education, and that too, not by a process of repulsive toil, but with a relish superior to all the seductions of romance. I am therefore a believer in the benefits accruing from simple country life and simple country habits, as here illustrated, and am therefore, on all occasions, anxious to recommend them to my

friends and countrymen. To city people, I would say, educate your children, at least partially, in the country, so as to imbue them with the love of nature, and that knowledge and training which spring from simple rustic sports, exercises, and employments. To country people, I would remark, be not envious of the city, for in the general balance of good and evil, you have your full portion of the first, with a diminished share of the last.

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## LETTER IX.

*Death of Washington—Jefferson and Democracy—Ridgefield on the Great Thoroughfare between New York and Boston—Jerome Bonaparte and his Young Wife—Oliver Wolcott, Governor Treadwell, and Deacon Olmstead—Inauguration of Jefferson—Jerry Mead and Ensign Keeler—Democracy and Federalism—Charter of Charles II.—Elizur Goodrich, Deacon Bishop, and President Jefferson—Abraham Bishop and "About Enough Democracy."*

MY DEAR C\*\*\*\*\*

The incidents I have just related revolved about the period of 1800—some a little earlier and some a little later. Among the events of general interest that occurred near this time, I remember the death of Washington, which took place in 1799, and was commemorated all through the country by the tolling of bells, funeral ceremonies, orations, sermons, hymns, and dirges, attended by a mournful sense of loss,

seeming to cast a pall over the entire heavens. In Ridgefield, the meeting-house was dressed in black, and we had a discourse pronounced by a Mr. Edmonds, of Newtown. The subject, indeed, engrossed all minds. Lieutenant Smith came every day to our house to talk over the event, and to bring us the proceedings in different parts of the country. Among other papers, he brought us a copy of the Connecticut Courant, then, as now, orthodox in all good things, and according to the taste of the times, duly sprinkled with murders, burglaries, and awful disclosures in general. This gave us the particulars of the rites and ceremonies which took place in Hartford, in commemoration of the Great Man's decease. The paper was bordered with black, which left its indelible ink in my memory. The celebrated hymn,\* written for the occasion by Theodore Dwight, sank into my mother's heart—for she had a constitu-

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\* HYMN sung at Hartford, Conn., during religious services performed on the occasion of the death of George Washington, Dec. 27th, 1799.

What solemn sounds the ear invade ?  
What wraps the land in sorrow's shade ?  
From heaven the awful mandate flies—  
The Father of his Country dies.

Let every heart be fill'd with woe,  
Let every eye with tears o'erflow ;  
Each form, oppress'd with deepest gloom,  
Be clad in vestments of the tomb.

Behold that venerable band—  
The rulers of our mourning land,  
With grief proclaim from shore to shore,  
Our guide, our Washington's no more.



tional love of things mournful and poetic—and she often repeated it, so that it became a part of the cherished lore of my childhood. This hymn has ever since been to me suggestive of a solemn pathos, mingled with the Ridgefield commemoration of Washington's death—the black drapery of the meeting-house, and the toll of those funeral bells, far, far over the distant hills, now lost and now remembered, as if half a dream and half a reality—yet for these reasons, perhaps, the more suggestive and the more mournful.

I give you these scenes and feelings in some detail, to impress you with the depth and sincerity of this mourning of the American nation, in cities and towns, in villages and hamlets, for the death of Washington. It seems to me wholesome to go back and sympathize with those who had stood in his presence, and catch from them the feeling which should be sacredly cherished in all future time.\*

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Where shall our country turn its eye?  
What help remains beneath the sky?  
Our Friend, Protector, Strength, and Trust,  
Lies low, and mouldering in the dust.

Almighty God ! to Thee we fly ;  
Before Thy throne above the sky,  
In deep prostration humbly bow,  
And pour the penitential vow.

Hear, O Most High ! our earnest prayer—  
Our country take beneath Thy care ;  
When dangers press and foes draw near,  
Let future Washingtons appear.

\* Mr. Jefferson and his satellites had begun their attacks upon Washington several years before this period ; but beyond the circle of

I have already said that Ridgefield was on the great thoroughfare between Boston and New York, for the day of steamers and railroads had not

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interested partisans, and those to whom virtue is a reproach and glory an offence, they had not yet corrupted or abused the hearts of the people. Some years later, under the presidency of Jefferson and his immediate successor, democracy being in the ascendant, Washington seemed to be fading from the national remembrance. Jefferson was then the master; and even somewhat later, a distinguished Senator said in his place in Congress, that his name and his principles exercised a greater influence over the minds of the people of his native State—Virginia—than even the “Father of his Country.” Strange to say, this declaration was made rather in the spirit of triumph than of humiliation.

At the present day the name of Jefferson has lost much of its charm in the United States: democracy itself seems to be taking down its first idol, and placing Andrew Jackson upon the pedestal. Formerly “*Jefferson Democracy*” was the party watchword: now it is “*Jackson Democracy*.” The disclosures of the last thirty years—made by Mr. Jefferson’s own correspondence, and that of others—show him to have been very different from what he appeared to be. Had his true character been fully understood, it is doubtful if he would ever have been President of the United States. He was in fact a marvelous compound of good and evil, and it is not strange that it has taken time to comprehend him. He was a man of rare intellectual faculties, but he had one defect—a want of practical controlling faith in God and man—in human truth and human virtue. He did good things, great things: he aided to construct noble institutions, but he undermined them by taking away their foundations. He was, in most respects, the opposite of Washington, and hence his hatred of him was no doubt sincere. We may even suppose that the virulent abuse which he caused to be heaped upon him by hireling editors, was at least partially founded upon conviction. Washington believed in God, and made right the starting-point of all his actions. Next to God, was his country. His principles went before; there was no expediency for him, that was not dictated by rectitude of thought, word, and deed. He was a democrat, but in the English, Puritan, sense—that of depositing power in the hands of the people, and of seeking to guide them only by the truth—by instructing them, elevating them, and exclusively for their own good. Jefferson, on the contrary, was a democrat according to French ideas, and those of the loosest days of the Revolution. Expediency was with him the beginning, the middle, the end of conduct. God seems not to have been in all his thought. He penetrated the masses with his astute intelligence: he had seen in Paris how they could be deluded, stimulated,

dawned. Even the mania for turnpikes, which ere long overspread New England, had not yet arrived. The stage-coaches took four days to make the trip of two hundred miles between the two great cities. In winter, the journey was often protracted to a week, and during the furious snow-storms of those times, to eight or ten days. With such public con-

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led, and especially by artful appeals to the baser passions. His party policy seems to have been founded upon a low estimate of human nature in general, and a contempt of the majority in particular. Hence, in attempting to elevate himself to the chief magistracy of the Union, his method was to vilify Washington, and at the same time to pay court to the foibles, prejudices, and low propensities of the million. Demagogism was his system, and never was it more seductively practiced. Over all there was a profound veil of dissimulation; a placid philosophy seemed to sit upon his face, even while he was secretly urging the assassin's blade to the hilt, against the name and fame of him who was "first in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of his countrymen." Simplicity and humility appeared to rule in his bosom, while yet he was steadily paving his way to power. He succeeded, and through the prestige of his position, the original democracy of the United States was cast in his image. He was the father, the founder, the establisher of demagogism in this country, and this unmanly and debasing system of policy has since continued to contaminate and debauch the politics of the land.

There is perhaps some growing disgust at this state of things, but whether we shall ever return to the open, manly, patriotic principles and practice of Washington, is a question which no man can presume to answer. At all events, it seems to me, every one who has influence should sedulously exert it to purify, elevate, and ennoble the public spirit. As one means, let us ever keep in view—let us study and cherish—the character of Washington. Let our politicians even, do this, and while they esteem and follow what was really good in Jefferson, let them beware how they commend his character as an example to those over whom they exercise a controlling influence.

Power is ennobling, when honorably acquired, and patriotically employed; but when obtained by intrigue, and used for selfish ends, it is degrading alike to him who exercises it and those who are subjected to its influence. It is quite time that all good men should combine to put down demagogues and demagogism.

veyances, great people—for even then the world was divided into the great and little, as it is now—traveled in their own carriages.

About this time—it must have been in the summer of 1804—I remember Jerome Bonaparte coming up to Keeler's tavern with a coach and four, attended by his young wife, Miss Patterson, of Baltimore. It was a gay establishment, and the honeymoon sat happily on the tall, sallow stripling, and his young bride. You must remember that Napoleon was then filling the world with his fame: at this moment his feet were on the threshold of the empire. The arrival of his brother in the United States of course made a sensation. His marriage, his movements, all were gossiped over, from Maine to Georgia—not Castine to California—these being the extreme points of the Union. His entrance into Ridgefield produced a flutter of excitement, even there. A crowd gathered around Keeler's tavern, to catch a sight of the strangers, and I among the rest. I had a good, long look at Jerome, who was the chief object of interest, and the image never faded from my recollection.

Half a century later, I was one evening at the Tuileries, amid the flush and the fair of Louis Napoleon's new court. Among them I saw an old man, taller than the mass around—his nose and chin almost meeting in contact, while his toothless gums were “munching the airy meal of dotage and decrepitude.” I was irre-

sistibly chained to this object, as if a spectre had risen up through the floor, and stood among the garish throng. My memory traveled back—back among the winding labyrinths of years. Suddenly I found the clue: the stranger was Jerome Bonaparte!

Ah, what a history lay between the past and present—a lapse of nearly fifty years. What a difference between him then and now! Then he was a gay and gallant bridegroom; now, though he had the title of king, he was throneless and scepterless—an Invalid Governor of Invalids—the puppet and pageant of an adventurer, whose power lay in the mere magic of a name.\*

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\* Jerome Bonaparte, the youngest brother of Napoleon, was born in 1784, and is now (1856) 72 years old. He was educated for the naval service, and in 1801 had the command of the corvette, *L'Epervier*. In this, the same year, he sailed with the expedition to St. Domingo, commanded by his brother-in-law, Gen. Leclerc. In March following he was sent to France with dispatches, but speedily returned. Hostilities soon after were renewed between France and England, and he sailed on a cruise for some months, finally putting into the port of New York. He was treated with marked attention in the principal cities—New York, Boston, Philadelphia, and Baltimore. In the latter he became attached to Elizabeth Patterson—daughter of an eminent merchant there—and distinguished for her beauty and accomplishments. In December, 1803, they were married with due ceremony by John Carroll, the Catholic Bishop of Baltimore, in the presence of several persons of high distinction. He remained about a year in America, and in the spring of 1805 he sailed with his wife for Europe. Napoleon disapproved of the match, and on the arrival of the vessel at the Texel, it was found that orders had been left with the authorities not to permit Jerome's wife to land. She accordingly sailed for England, and taking up her residence in the vicinity of London, gave birth to a son, July 7, 1805. This is the present Jerome Napoleon Bonaparte, of Baltimore.

Napoleon, who had now become emperor, and desired to use his broth-

About this time, as I well remember, Oliver Wolcott passed through our village. He arrived at the tavern late on Saturday evening, but he called at our house in the morning, his family being connected

ers for his own purposes, set himself to work to abrogate the marriage, and applied to Pope Pius VII. for this purpose. That prelate, however, refused, inasmuch as the grounds set forth for such a measure were altogether fallacious. Napoleon, however, who was wholly unscrupulous, forced his brother into another match, August 12, 1807, with the princess Frederica Catherina, daughter of the King of Wurtemberg. A few days after he was proclaimed King of Westphalia, which had been created into a kingdom for him. He remained in this position till the overthrow of the Bonapartes in 1814. After this he lived sometimes in Austria, sometimes in Italy, and finally in Paris. He was elected a member of the Constitutional Convention of 1848, and was afterwards made Governor of the Invalides. When Louis Napoleon became emperor in 1852, the Palais Royal was fitted up for him, and he now resides there—his son, Prince Napoleon, and his daughter (formerly married to the Russian Prince Demidoff, but divorced some ten years ago), Princess Mathilde, also having their apartments there.

Jerome Bonaparte has very moderate abilities, and though he is now considered as nominally in the line of succession after the present emperor, his position is only that of a pageant, and even this is derived solely from his being the brother of Napoleon. He is taller by some inches than was the emperor: he, however, has the bronze complexion, and something of the black, stealthy eye, broad brow, the strong, prominent chin, the oval face, and the cold, stony expression, which characterized his renowned brother.

Mrs. Patterson has not followed the career of her weak and unprincipled husband, but has continued to respect her marriage vow. In 1824, being in Dublin, I was informed by Lady Morgan, who had recently seen her in Paris, that the princess Borghese (Napoleon's sister Pauline) had offered to Mrs. Patterson to adopt her son, and make him heir of her immense possessions, if he would come to Italy, and be placed under her care: her answer was, that she preferred to have him a respectable citizen of the United States to any position wealth or power could give him in Europe. She doubtless judged well and wisely, for the Princess Borghese has left behind her a most detestable reputation. Jerome Napoleon Bonaparte, of Baltimore, has recently been to Paris, where he has been well received by his father and the emperor; and his son, educated at West Point, is a captain in the French army in the Crimea, and has just been decorated with the Cross of the Legion of Honor (1856).



with ours. He was a great man then; for not only are the Wolcotts traditionally and historically a distinguished race in Connecticut, but he had recently been a member of Washington's cabinet. I shall have occasion to speak of him more particularly hereafter. I mention him now only for the purpose of noting his deference to public opinion, characteristic of the eminent men of that day. In the morning he went to church, but immediately after the sermon, he had his horses brought up, and proceeded on his way. He, however, had requested my father to state to his people, at the opening of the afternoon service, that he was traveling on public business, and though he regretted it, he was obliged to continue his journey on the Sabbath. This my father did, but Deacon Olmstead, the Jeremiah of the parish, shook his white locks, and lifted up his voice against such a desecration of the Lord's day. Some years after—as I remember—Lieutenant-governor Treadwell arrived at Keeler's tavern on Saturday evening, and prepared to prosecute his journey the next morning, his daughter, who was with him, being ill. This same Deacon Olmstead called upon him, and said, "Sir, if you thus set the example of a violation of the Sabbath, you must expect to get one vote less at the next election!" The Governor was so much struck by the appearance of the deacon—who was the very image of a patriarch or a prophet—that he deferred his departure till Monday.



Another event of this era I remember, and that is, the celebration of the inauguration of Jefferson, March 4th, A. D. 1801. At this period, the Democratic, or, as it was then called, the Republican party, was not large in Connecticut, yet it was zealous in proportion to its insignificance. The men of wealth, the professional men—those of good position and large influence generally—throughout the State, were almost exclusively federalists. The old platform of religion and politics still stood strong, although agitated and fretted a little by the rising tide of what afterward swelled into a flood, under the captivating name of Toleration. The young Hercules in Ridgefield was in his cradle when Jefferson was made President; but nevertheless, he used his lungs lustily upon the occasion. On the day of the inauguration, the old field-piece, a four-pounder, which had been stuck muzzle down as a horse-post at Keeler's tavern, since the fight of 1777, was dug up, swabbed, and fired off sixteen times, that being the number of States then in the Union. At first the cannon had a somewhat stifled and wheezing tone, but this soon grew louder, and at last the hills re-echoed to the rejoicing of democracy from High Ridge to West Mountain. This might be taken as prophetic, for the voice of democracy, then small and asthmatic, like this old field-piece, soon cleared its throat, and thundered like Sinai, giving law to the land.

My father was a man of calm and liberal temper,

but he was still of the old school, believing in things as they were, and therefore he regarded these demonstrations with a certain degree of horror. But no doubt he felt increased anxiety from the fact that several of the members of his congregation participated in these unseemly orgies. Among these—who would have thought it?—was Jerry Mead, the shoemaker, once itinerant, but now settled down, and keeping his shop. He was one of our near neighbors, and the sound of his lapstone, early and late, was as regular as the tides. His son Sammy was his apprentice, and having a turn for mirth and music, diverted the neighborhood by playing popular airs as he pounded his leather; but Jerry himself was a grave, nay, an austere person, and for this reason, as well as others, was esteemed a respectability. He was a man of plain, strong sense; he went regularly to meeting; sent his children to school, and cut their hair, close and square, according to the creed. It might have been natural enough for his son Sammy, who was given to the earthly vanities of music, dancing, and the like, to have turned out a democrat; but for sour, sober, sensible Jerry—it was quite another thing. What must have been my father's concern to find on the occasion of the aforesaid celebration that Jerry Mead had joined the rabble, and—in a moment of exaltation, it is said—delivered an oration at one of their clubs! This might have been borne—for Jerry was not then a professor—but

conceive his emotion when he heard that Ensign Keeler—the butcher and bell-ringer—who was a half-way covenant-member of the church, had touched off the cannon! I am happy to believe that both these persons saw the error of their ways, and died old federalists, as well as church members in full communion—notwithstanding these dark episodes; but for the time, their conduct seemed to shake the very pillars of the state.

It is difficult for the present generation to enter into the feelings of those days. We who are now familiar with democracy, can hardly comprehend the odium attached to it in the age to which I refer, especially in the minds of the sober people of our neighborhood. They not only regarded it as hostile to good government, but as associated with infidelity in religion, radicalism in government, and licentiousness in society. It was considered a sort of monster, born of Tom Paine,\* the French Revolution, foreign

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\* The French Revolution reached its height in 1793, under what was called the Convention. The king perished on the scaffold in January of that year, and the queen and the other members of the royal family soon after. Atheism had taken the place of religion, and government was a wholesale system of murder. All that was good in society seemed to have perished. The Reign of Terror was established under Robespierre and his Jacobin Associates in 1794. About this time the French Minister Genet came to the United States, and under his auspices, *Democratic Clubs*, modeled after those in France, which had enabled the Jacobins to get possession of the government of France, were organized in the United States. Their object was to place our government in the hands of the Jacobins here. This was the beginning of democracy in this country.

The people of America, grateful to France for her assistance in ob-

renegadoes, and the great Father of Evil. Mr. Jefferson, the founder of the party, had been in France, and was supposed by his political opponents to have adopted the atheism and the libertinism of the revolutionists. His personal character and dangerous

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taining our Independence, naturally sympathized with that nation in its attempts to establish a free government. They therefore looked upon the Revolution there with favor, amounting at the outset to enthusiasm. When Genet arrived, not fully appreciating the horrors it was perpetrating, many of our people still clung to it with hope, if not with confidence. Designing men saw the use they could make of this feeling, and in order to employ it for the purposes of seizing upon the government, promoted the democratic clubs, and sought to rouse the feelings of the masses into a rage resembling that which was deluging Paris with blood. Some of these leaders were Americans, but the most active were foreigners, many of them adventurers, and men of desperate character. One of the most prominent was Thomas Paine, whose name is now synonymous with infamy. He was a fair representative of democracy at this period.

Fortunately for our country and for mankind, Washington was now President, and by his wisdom, his calmness, and his force of character and influence, conducted the country through a tempest of disorder which threatened to overwhelm it. Thus, a second time was he the Saviour of his country. He naturally became the object of hatred to the democrats, and upon him all the vials of their wrath were poured. Jefferson, as is now known, encouraged, employed, and paid some of these defamers. It is true that at this time he did not adopt the term democrat—nor do we believe he shared its spirit to the full extent: he preferred the term republican, as did his followers, at the outset. Afterward they adopted the term democrat, in which they now rejoice. Of the democratic party, Jefferson was, however, the efficient promoter at the beginning, and may be considered its father and its founder. From these facts, it will be seen that this dread of him, on the part of the staid, conservative, Puritan people of New England, was not without good foundation. See *Hildreth's History of the United States*, second series, vol. i. pp. 424 and 455; also *Griswold's Republican Court*, p. 290.

As Jefferson was the leader of the democratic party, so Washington was the head of the federalists. Since that period the terms *democrat* and *federalist* have undergone many changes of signification, and have been used for various purposes. *Democracy* is still the watchword of party, but the term *federalism* is merely historical, that of *whig* having been adopted by the conservatives.

political proclivities, as I have said, were not then well understood. The greatest fear of him, at this time, was as to his moral, religious, and social influence. It was supposed that his worshipers could not be better than their idol, and it must be confessed that the democracy of New England in its beginning raked up and absorbed the chaff of society. It is due to the truth of history to state that men of blemished reputations, tipplers, persons of irregular tempers, odd people, those who were constitutionally upsetters,\* de-

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\* I have just stated the historical origin of the two great parties in the United States. These, though taking their rise from passing events, had a deeper root. In all countries, where there is liberty of speech and print, there will be two parties—the *Conservatives* and the *Radicals*. These differences arise mainly from the constitutions of men and their varying conditions in society. Some are born *Destructives* and some *Constructives*. The former constitute the nucleus of the radical party. They are without property, and therefore make war on property, and those who possess it. One of this class, a born radical, usually passes his whole life in this condition, for in his nature he is opposed to accumulation. He is characterized by the parable of the rolling-stone which gathers no moss. The mass of the radical party in all countries is made up of such persons. The born constructive, on the contrary, is for law and order by instinct as well as reflection. He is industrious, frugal, acquisitive: he accumulates property, he constructs a fortune, and becomes in all things conservative.

From these two sources, the great parties in the United States derive their chief recruits. Most men of intelligence and reflection, however, are conservatives in their convictions, because it is by the maintenance of order alone that life and liberty can be preserved. But unhappily intelligent men are often destitute of principle; they sometimes desire to wield political power, and as this is frequently in the hands of the radicals, they play the demagogue, and flatter the masses, to obtain their votes. Ex-president John Adams said, with great truth, that when a man, born in the circle of aristocracy, undertakes to play the demagogue, he generally does it with more art and success than any other person. When the demagogue has acquired power—when he has attained the object of his ambition—he generally takes off the mask, and as he can now afford it he is henceforth a conservative. This is the history of

structives, comeouters, flocked spontaneously, as if by a kind of instinct, to the banner of democracy, about the period of Jefferson's first election, and constituted, for a considerable period afterward, the staple of the party. In due time and when they had increased in numbers, they gradually acquired respectable leaders. General King, who became the head of the party in Ridgefield, was a high-minded, intelligent man; and so it happened in other places. But still, the mass in the outset were such as I have described.

It may be conjectured, then, with what concern a sincere and earnest pastor—like my father—saw some

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most demagogues in this country. Hence it is that demagogism has not had the fatal consequences that might have been anticipated. It has indeed defiled our politics, it has degraded our manners, and should be spurned by every manly bosom; but yet it has stopped short of the destruction of our government and our institutions.

Demagogism has prevailed to such an extent among us, that a very large share of the political offices are now held by demagogues. It was otherwise at the outset of our government. The people then cast about and selected their best men: now party managers take the matter into their own hands, and often select the worst men for officers, as none but persons who can be bought and sold would answer their purpose. Thus, office has sunk in respectability. We have no longer Washingtons, Ellsworths, Shermans—men of honor to the heart's core—at the head of affairs, and stamping our manners and our institutions with virtue and dignity. Office is so low that our first-class men shun it. We have too many inferior men in high places—who, in degrading their stations, degrade the country. This is wrong: it is a sin against reason, common sense, patriotism, and prudence. Nevertheless, there is, despite these adverse circumstances, spread over this vast country a sober, solid, and virtuous majority—some in one party and some in another—who will not permit these evils to *destroy* our institutions. Whoever may rule, there is and will be a preponderance of conservatism, and this, we trust, will save us. Democracy may rave—radicalism may foam at the mouth, and these may get the votes and appropriate the spoils, but still law and order will prevail, through the supremacy of reason, rectitude, and religion.



of the members of his own flock, including others whom he hoped to gather into the fold, kneeling down to this Moloch of democracy. Time passed on, and less than twenty years after, federalism was overturned, and democracy triumphed in Connecticut. The old time-honored parchment of Charles II., supposed to be a sort of eleventh commandment, and firm as Plymouth Rock, passed away, like a scroll, and a new constitution was established. What bodings, what anxieties, were experienced during this long agony of Conservatism! And yet society survived. The old landmarks, though shaken, still remained, and some of them even derived confidence, if not firmness, from the agitation. Nay, strange to say, in the succeeding generation, democracy cast its slough, put on clean linen, and affected respectability. Many of the sons of the democrats of 1800, and conceived in its image, were the leaders of federalism in 1825. Indeed, the word democracy, which was first used as synonymous with Jacobinism, has essentially changed its signification, and now means little more than the progressive party, in opposition to the conservative party.

Such is the cycle of politics, such are the oscillations of progress and conservatism, which, in point of fact, regulate the great march of society, and spur it on to constant advances in civilization. These two forces, if not indispensable to liberty, are always attendant upon it; one is centripetal, the other centrifugal, and are always in conflict and contending



against each other. The domination of either would doubtless lead to abuses; but the spirit of both, duly tempered, combines to work out the good of all. One thing is settled in this country—though democracy may seem to rule; though it may carry the elections and engross the offices, it is still obliged to bow to conservatism, which insists upon the supremacy of law and order. Democracy may be a good ladder on which to climb into power, but it is then generally thrown down, with contempt, by those who have accomplished their object, and have no further use for it.

I must here note, in due chronological order, an event which caused no little public emotion. One of the first, and perhaps the most conspicuous victim of proscription in Jefferson's time, was my uncle, Elizur Goodrich, Collector of the port of New Haven—at that time an office of some importance, as New Haven had then a large West India trade. The story is thus told by the historian:

“ One of the most noticeable of these cases was the removal of Elizur Goodrich, lately a representative in Congress from Connecticut, who had resigned his seat to accept the office of Collector of New Haven. In his place was appointed Samuel Bishop, a respectable old man of seventy-seven, but so nearly blind, that he could hardly write his name, and with no particular qualifications for the office, or claim to it, except being the father of one Abraham Bishop, a young democrat, a lawyer without practice, for whom the appointment was originally intended. The claims of the younger Bishop consisted in two political orations, which he had recently delivered; one of them by a sort of surprise before a literary society of Yale College, an occa-

sion upon which all the dignitaries of the State were collected. This was a vehement and flippant, but excessively shallow declamation, yet suited to alarm the popular mind, the burden of it being that by commercial, military, clerical, and legal delusions, a monarchy\* and aristocracy were just on the point of being saddled on the country. To this oration, already in print before it had been delivered, and which was at once distributed as an electioneering document—the choice of presidential electors being then about to take place—Noah Webster had immediately published a cutting reply, entitled ‘A Rod for the Fool’s Back.’ The younger Bishop’s second oration, delivered at a festival to celebrate the republican triumph, was a parallel, drawn at great length, between Jefferson and Jesus Christ—‘The illustrious chief who, once insulted, now presides over the Union, and Him who, once insulted, now presides over the universe.’”—*Hildreth’s History of the United States*, vol. ii. p. 429.

For several reasons, this event caused great excitement. The election of Jefferson had been made by the House of Representatives, after a severe conflict, which lasted several weeks. The choice was finally effected by Mr. Jefferson’s giving pledges to James A. Bayard, of Delaware, and some other federal members, who consequently withdrew their opposition. He agreed, if elected, to follow certain principles of conduct, and stipulated, that while, of course, he would fill

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\* The great alarm-cry of the leaders of democracy at this period was, that the federalists sympathized with England and hated France; that hence it was clear they were monarchists at heart, and designed to overthrow our republic, and establish a monarchy in its place. Washington was openly and repeatedly charged as a traitor, entertaining these views and purposes. It is now known, as already intimated, that Jefferson encouraged and even paid some of the editors who made these charges. See *Hildreth*, vol. ii. p. 454, &c. Second Series.

important confidential offices—as those of the secretaries of state and treasury, foreign ministers, &c., with persons of his own political creed—no removals from inferior stations, such as “*collectors of ports*,” &c., including offices of mere detail, generally, should take place on the ground of opinion. The removal above alluded to, being in direct violation of this pledge, caused great indignation.

Hitherto removals of even inferior officers had never been made because their opinions did not suit the President, and hence this instance created general surprise as well as alarm, especially when the circumstances and the motives for the measure were taken into consideration. The principal citizens of New Haven, particularly the merchants, felt this as a severe blow, and accordingly addressed to the President a respectful but earnest remonstrance against the change that had taken place. Mr. Jefferson replied in a letter, which has become celebrated, as it not only displayed, in a remarkable degree, his rhetorical skill and political tact, but it may be said to have settled, as a matter of principle in our government, that it is within the province of the President to make removals from office on mere party grounds. It is true that this was not largely practiced by Mr. Jefferson, for public opinion seemed not then to be prepared for it; but the example he set, and the skill he manifested in defending this fatal doctrine, afterward resulted in an open declaration

by his party, that "*to the victors belong the spoils*"—and hence the whole arena of politics has been degraded by infusing into it the selfishness and violence which characterize a battle, where "beauty and booty" is the watchword.

I may not find a better place than this for an anecdote, which shows the tendency of political storms, like those of nature—by sea and by land—to revolve in a circle. This Abraham Bishop, just mentioned, the son of Collector Bishop, grew up a democrat, and became an able and skillful stump orator. He is said to have originated the electioneering apothegm—"one doubt loses ten votes!" For several years he was the Boanerges of the party in Connecticut, and always went on a circuit to stir up the democracy just previous to the elections. At length he was appointed Collector of the port of New Haven, with some five thousand dollars a year. Well: again, when an election was approaching, he was desired by the leaders of the party to go forth and wake up the democracy by a round of speeches. "No, no," said the Collector with \$5000 a year: "I think we have quite democracy enough, now!" A few years later, Mr. Bishop was in the ranks of the whigs or federalists, and died much respected as a man of conservative politics, morals, and manners!

In short, my dear C . . . , though I respect a quiet, conscientious democrat, as much as I do any other man—still, when I see a noisy politician crying out, "The

democracy! ho, the democracy!"—I consider it pretty certain—judging from long experience and observation—that, according to the proverb, "Somebody has an axe to grind," and desires to wheedle his dupes into turning the grindstone, gratis.

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## LETTER X.

*How People traveled Fifty Years ago—Timothy Pickering—Manners along the Road—Jefferson and Shoe-strings—Mr. Priest and Mr. Democrat—Barbers at Washington—James Madison and the Queue—Winter and Sleighing—Comfortable Meeting-houses—The Stove Party and the Anti-Stove Party—The first Chaise built in Ridgefield—The Beginning of the Carriage Manufacture there.*

MY DEAR C\*\*\*\*\*

I have incidentally remarked that about the beginning of the present century great people traveled, in our quarter, not in cars, or steamers, or even in stage-coaches, to any considerable extent, but in their own carriages. The principal travel was on horseback. Many of the members of Congress came to Washington in this way. I have a dim recollection of seeing one day, when I was trudging along to school, a tall, pale, gaunt man, approaching on horseback with his plump saddlebags behind him. I looked at him keenly, and made my obeisance as in duty bound. He lifted his hat, and bowed in return. By a quick instinct, I set him down as a man of mark. In the

evening, Lieutenant Smith came to our house and told us that Timothy Pickering had passed through the town! He had seen him and talked with him, and was vastly distended with the portentous news thereby acquired—including the rise and fall of empires for ages to come—and all of which he duly unfolded to our family circle.

Before I proceed, let me note, in passing, a point of manners then universal, but which has now nearly faded away. When travelers met with people on the highway, both saluted one another with a certain dignified and formal courtesy. All children were regularly taught at school to "make their manners" to strangers; the boys to bow and the girls to courtesy. It was something different from the frank, familiar "How are you, stranger?" of the Far West; something different from the "*bon jour, serviteur*," of the Alps. These no doubt arise from the natural sociability of man, and are stimulated into a fashion and a tradition by the sparseness of the population, for sociability is greatly promoted by isolation. Our salute was more measured and formal, respect to age and authority being evidently an element of this homage, which was sedulously taught to the young. Its origin I cannot tell; perhaps it came from England with the Puritans, and was a vestige of that kindly ceremony which always marks the intercourse of the upper and lower classes in a country where the patrician and plebeian are estab-

lished by law and public sentiment. Perhaps it bespoke also something of that reign of authority, which then regulated society in the affairs of Church and State.

But however this may be, it is certain that for children to salute travelers was, in my early days, as well a duty as a decency. A child who did not "make his manners" to a stranger on the high-road, was deemed a low fellow; a stranger who refused to acknowledge this civility was esteemed a *sans culotte*—perhaps a favorer of Jacobinism. It may be remarked that men of the highest rank in those days were particular in these attentions to children; indeed, I may say that the emphasis of a stranger's courtesy was generally the measure of his station. I can testify that in my own case, the effect of this was to impress me strongly with the amiability of rank which thus condescended to notice a child; at the same time, it encouraged children, in some sort, to imitate high and honorable examples.

The decadence of this good old highway politeness in Connecticut, began soon after the period of which I now write. Remember that this was long before the era of railroads and lightning telegraphs. Of course it would be idle for boys and girls now-a-days to undertake to bow and courtesy to locomotives: in such a process they would run the risk of wringing their necks and tripping up their heels. But forty years ago people plodded along at the rate of two



to four miles the hour. Everybody had time then to be polite. It is all changed: aspiring young America was then slow, as it is fast now. Since every thing goes by steam and electricity, tall walking and tall talking are the vogue. It is easy to comprehend how this comes about; but it was even before the advent of this age of agony, that the good old country custom on the part of the rising generation, to salute strangers along the road, had waned. It first subsided into a vulgar nod, half ashamed and half impudent, and then, like the pendulum of a dying clock, totally ceased.

Thus passed away the age of politeness. For some reason or other, it seems to have gone down with old Hartford Convention Federalism. The change in manners had no doubt been silently going on for some time; but it was not distinctly visible to common eyes till the establishment of the new constitution. Powder and queues, cocked-hats and broad-brims, white-top boots, breeches, and shoe-buckles—signs and symbols of a generation, a few examples of which still lingered among us—finally departed with the Charter of Charles II., while with the new constitution of 1818, short hair, pantaloons, and round hats with narrow brims, became the established costume of men of all classes.

Jefferson was, or affected to be, very simple in his taste, dress, and manners. He wore pantaloons, instead of breeches, and adopted leather shoe strings in

place of buckles. These and other similar things were praised by his admirers as signs of his democracy: a certain coarseness of manners, supposed to be encouraged by the leaders, passed to the led. Rudeness and irreverence were at length deemed democratic, if not democracy.\* An anecdote, which is strictly historical, will illustrate this.

About this time, there was in the eastern part of Connecticut a clergyman by the name of Cleveland, who was noted for his wit. One summer day, as he was riding along, he came to a brook. Here he paused to let his horse drink. Just then, a stranger rode into the stream from the opposite direction, and his horse began to drink also. The animals approached, as is their wont under such circumstances, and thus brought the two men face to face.

"How are you, priest?" said the stranger.

"How are you, democrat?" said the parson.

"How do you know I am a democrat?" said one.

"How do you know I am a priest?" said the other.

"I know you to be a priest by your dress," said the stranger.

"I know you to be a democrat by your address," said the parson.

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\* Jefferson carried his plebeianism so far as to put an end to the social gatherings of the people at the President's house, called *levees*. Madison, who was a better—that is, a wiser and truer—democrat, saw that these meetings tended at once to elevation of manners and equalization of social position, and restored them. Mrs. Madison's levees were not less brilliant than those of lady Washington, though they were less dignified and refined.

There is an anecdote of a somewhat later date, which illustrates the same point. In Washington's time, the manners of the country, among the leading classes, assumed a good deal of stateliness, and this was perpetuated by the example of this great man—great alike from his office, his character, and his history. This was made the foundation of the charge against him—so basely urged—that he was at heart a monarchist. It was but natural that Jefferson should appear to be, in all things, his opposite. Under his administration, as I have just said, a great change was effected in external manners. As was reasonable, the democrats followed the example of their leader, now chief magistrate of the nation, while among the old federalists there still lingered vestiges of the waning costume of other days.

A very keen observer, then and long afterward a senator of the United States, once told me that at this period, all the barbers of Washington were federalists, and he imputed it to the fact that the leaders of that party in Congress wore powder and long queues, and of course had them dressed every day by the barber. The democrats, on the contrary, wore short hair, or, at least, small queues, tied up carelessly with a ribbon, and therefore gave little encouragement to the tonsorial art. One day, as the narrator told me, while he was being shaved by the leading barber of the city—who was of course a federalist—the latter suddenly and vehemently burst out against the

nomination of Madison for the presidency by the democratic party, which had that morning been announced.

“Dear me!” said the barber, “surely this country is doomed to disgrace and shame. What Presidents we might have, sir! Just look at Daggett of Connecticut and Stockton of New Jersey! What queues they have got, sir—as big as your wrist, and powdered every day, sir, like real gentlemen as they are. Such men, sir, would confer dignity upon the chief magistracy; but this little Jim Madison, with a queue no bigger than a pipe-stem! Sir, it is enough to make a man forswear his country!”

But I must return to locomotion—not railing but wheeling. In Ridgefield, in the year 1800, there was but a single chaise, and that belonged to Colonel Bradley, one of the principal citizens of the place. It was without a top, and had a pair of wide-spreading, asinine ears. That multitudinous generation of traveling vehicles, so universal and so convenient now—such as top-wagons, four-wheeled chaises, tilburies, dearborns, &c., was totally unknown. Even if these things had been invented, the roads would scarcely have permitted the use of them. Physicians who had occasion to go from town to town, went on horseback; all clergymen, except perhaps Bishop Seabury, who rode in a coach, traveled in the same way. My father’s people, who lived at a distance, came to church on horseback—their

wives and daughters being seated on pillions behind them. In a few cases—as in spring-time, when the mud had no soundings—the farm wagon was used for transporting the family.

In winter it was otherwise, for we had three or four months of sleighing. Then the whole country was a railroad, and gay times we had. Oh! those beautiful winters, which would drive me shivering to the fireside now: what vivid delight have I had in your slidings and skatings, your sleddings and sleighings! One thing strikes me now with wonder, and that is, the general indifference, in those days, to the intensity of winter. No doubt, as I have said before, the climate was then more severe; but be that as it may, people seemed to suffer less from it than at the present day. Nobody thought of staying at home from church because of the extremity of the weather. We had no thermometers, it is true, to frighten us with the revelation that it was twenty-five degrees below zero. The habits of the people were simple and hardy, and there were few defences against the assaults of the seasons. The houses were not tight; we had no stoves, no Lehigh or Lackawanna coal; yet we lived, and comfortably too; nay, we even changed burly winter into a season of enjoyment.

Let me tell you a story, by the way, upon the meeting-houses of those days. They were of wood, and slenderly built, of course admitting somewhat freely the blasts of the seasons. In the severe win-

ter days, we only mitigated the temperature by foot-stoves; but these were deemed effeminate luxuries, suited to women and children. What would have been thought of Deacon Olmstead and Granther Baldwin, had they yielded to the weakness of a foot-stove!

The age of comfortable meeting-houses and churches, in county towns, was subsequent to this, some twenty or thirty years. All improvement is gradual, and frequently advances only by conflict with prejudice, and victory over opposition. In a certain county town within my knowledge, the introduction of stoves into the meeting-house, about the year 1830, threatened to overturn society. The incident may be worth detailing, for trifles often throw light upon important subjects.

In this case, the metropolis, which we will call H..., had adopted stoves in the churches, and naturally enough some people of the neighboring town of E.... set about introducing this custom into the meeting-house in their own village. Now, the two master-spirits of society—the Demon of Progress and the Angel of Conservatism—somehow or other had got into the place, and as soon as this reform was suggested, they began to wrestle with the people, until at last the church and society were divided into two violent factions—the Stove Party and the Anti-stove Party. At the head of the first was Mrs. Deacon K.... and at the head of the latter was Mrs. Deacon P..... The battle raged portentously, very much

like the renowned tempest in a teapot. Society was indeed lashed into a foam. The minister, between the contending factions, scarcely dared to say his soul was his own. He could scarcely find a text from "Genesis to Jude," that might not commit him on one side or the other. The strife—of course—ran into politics, and the representative to the assembly got in by a happy knack at dodging the question in such wise as to be claimed by both parties.

Finally, the progressionists prevailed—the stove party triumphed, and the stoves were accordingly installed. Great was the humiliation of the anti-stoveites; nevertheless, they concluded to be submissive to the dispensations of Providence. On the Sabbath succeeding the installation of the stoves, Mrs. Deacon P . . . , instead of staying away, did as she ought, and went to church. As she moved up the broad aisle, it was remarked that she looked pale but calm, as a martyr should, conscious of injury, yet struggling to forgive. Nevertheless, when the minister named his text—Romans xii. 20—and spoke about heaping coals of fire on the head—she slid from her seat, and subsided gently upon the floor. The train of ideas suggested was, in fact, too much for her heated brain and shattered nerves. Suddenly there was a rush to the pew, and the fainting lady was taken out. When she came to the air, she slightly revived.

"Pray what is the matter?" said Mrs. Deacon



K...., who bent over her, holding a smelling-bottle to her nose.

"Oh, it is the heat of those awful stoves," said Mrs. Deacon P....

"No, no, my dear," said Mrs. Deacon K....; "that can't be: it's a warm day, you know, and there's no fire in them."

"No fire in the stoves?" said Mrs. Deacon P....

"Not a particle," said Mrs. Deacon K....

"Well, I feel better now," said the poor lady; and so bidding her friends good-by, she went home, in a manner suited to the occasion.

I have said that in the year 1800 there was but a single chaise in Ridgefield, and this was brought, I believe, from New Haven. There was not, I imagine, a coach, or any kind of pleasure vehicle—that crazy old chaise excepted—in the county of Fairfield, out of the two half-shire towns. Such things, indeed, were known at New York, Boston, and Philadelphia—for already the government had laid a tax upon pleasure conveyances; but they were comparatively few in number, and were mostly imported. In 1798, there was but one public hack in New Haven, and but one coach; the latter belonging to Pierpoint Edwards, being a large four-wheeled vehicle, for two persons, called a chariot. In the smaller towns, there were no pleasure vehicles in use throughout New England. What an Old Foggy the world was then!

About that time, there came to our village a man

by the name of Jesse J. Skellinger, an Englishman, and chaisemaker by trade. My father engaged him to build him a chaise. A bench was set up in our barn, and certain trees of oak and ash were cut in our neighboring woods. These were sawed and seasoned, and shaped into wheels and shafts. Eben. Hawley, half blacksmith and half wheelwright, was duly initiated, and he cunningly wrought the iron necessary for the work. In five months the chaise was finished, with a standing top—greatly to the admiration of our family. What a gaze was there, my countrymen, as this vehicle went through Ridgefield-street upon its first expedition!

This was the beginning of the chaise manufactory in Ridgefield, which has since been a source of large revenue to the town. Skellinger was engaged by Elijah Hawley, who had formerly done something as a wagon-builder, and thus in due time an establishment was founded, which for many years was noted for the beauty and excellence of its pleasure vehicles.

The origin of local and special kinds of industry is often hidden in mystery. It would be difficult to tell who began the manufactory of needles at Red-ditch, ribbons at St. Etienne, or watches at Geneva; but it is certain that our chaise, built in our barn, was the commencement of the Ridgefield carriage manufactory, which greatly flourished for a time, and gave rise to other branches of mechanical industry, which still contribute to the prosperity of the place.

## LETTER XI.

*Up-town and Down-town—East End and West End—Master Stebbins—A Model Schoolmaster—The School-house—Administration of the School—Zeek Sanford—School-books—Arithmetic—History—Grammar—Anecdote of G.... H.....—Country Schools of New England in these Days—Master Stebbins's Scholars.*

MY DEAR C\*\*\*\*\*

Ridgefield, as well as most other places, had its Up-town and Down-town—terms which have not unfrequently been the occasion of serious divisions in the affairs of Church and State. In London this distinction takes the name of West End and the City. The French philosophers say that every great capital has similar divisions—West End being always the residence of the aristocracy and East End of the *canaille*. They affirm that it is not only so in fact as to London, Paris, Vienna, and other capitals of the present day, but that it was so in Rome, Athens, Babylon, and Nineveh of old. This they explain by a general law, pervading all countries and all ages, which establishes a current of air from west to east, thus ventilating and purifying the one, and charging the other with the fuliginous vapors of a crowded population. Hence, they say that not only cities must have their West End and East End, but that houses should be built on the same principle—the parlor to the west and the kitchen to the east. This

is surely laying deep the foundations of the patrician and plebeian divisions of society.

Whether our great American cities furnish any support to this ingenious theory, I leave to be determined by the philosophers. I shall only venture to remark that Ridgefield, being a village, had a right to follow its own whim, and therefore West Lane, instead of being the aristocratic end of the place, was really rather the low end. It constituted in fact what was called *Down-town*, in distinction from the more eastern and northern section, called *Up-town*. In this latter portion, and about the middle of the main street, was the Up-town school, the leading seminary of the village, for at this period it had not arrived at the honors of an academy. At the age of ten years I was sent here, the institution being then, and many years after, under the charge of Master Stebbins. He was a man with a conciliating stoop in the shoulders, a long body, short legs, and a swaying walk. He was, at this period, some fifty years old, his hair being thin and silvery, and always falling in well-combed rolls, over his coat-collar. His eye was blue, and his dress invariably of the same color. Breeches and knee-buckles, blue-mixed stockings, and shoes with bright buckles, seemed as much a part of the man as his head and shoulders. On the whole, his appearance was that of the middle-class gentleman of the olden time, and he was in fact what he seemed.

This seminary of learning for the rising aristocracy of Ridgefield was a wooden edifice, thirty by twenty feet, covered with brown clapboards, and except an entry, consisted of a single room. Around, and against the walls ran a continuous line of seats, fronted by a continuous writing-desk. Beneath, were depositories for books and writing materials. The center was occupied by slab seats, similar to those of West Lane. The larger scholars were ranged on the outer sides, at the desks; the smaller fry of a-b-c-darians were seated in the center. The master was enshrined on the east side of the room, contrary, be it remembered, to the law of the French savans, which places dominion invariably in the west. Regular as the sun, Master Stebbins was in his seat at nine o'clock, and the performances of the school began.

According to the Catechism—which, by the way, we learned and recited on Saturday—the chief end of man was to glorify God and keep his commandments: according to the routine of this school, one would have thought it to be reading, writing, and arithmetic, to which we may add spelling. From morning to night, in all weathers, through every season of the year, these exercises were carried on with the energy, patience, and perseverance of a manufactory.

Master Stebbins respected his calling: his heart was in his work; and so, what he pretended to teach, he taught well. When I entered the school, I found

that a huge stride had been achieved in the march of mind since I had left West Lane. Webster's Spelling-book had taken the place of Dilworth, which was a great improvement. The drill in spelling was very thorough, and applied every day to the whole school. I imagine that the exercises might have been amusing to a stranger, especially as one scholar would sometimes go off in a voice as grum as that of a bull-frog, while another would follow in tones as fine and piping as a peet-weet. The blunders, too, were often ineffably ludicrous; even we children would sometimes have tittered, had not such an enormity been certain to have brought out the birch. As to rewards and punishments, the system was this: whoever missed went down; so that perfection mounted to the top. Here was the beginning of the up and down of life.

Reading was performed in classes, which generally plodded on without a hint from the master. Nevertheless, when Zeek Sanford\*—who was said to have a streak of lightning in him—in his haste to be smart,

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\* Ezekiel Sanford was a son of Colonel Benjamin Sanford, of Reading. The latter married a daughter of Col. David Olmstead, of Ridgefield, a man of great respectability: after residing a few years here, he removed to Onondaga county, New York, and thence to Philadelphia, and afterward to Germantown, where he died about thirty years ago.

Ezekiel, our schoolmate, was a lad of great spirit and excellent capacity. He was educated at Yale College, and was there noted as a promising writer. He subsequently became editor of the *Eclectic Magazine* at Philadelphia, and in 1819, published a *History of the United States before the Revolution, with some account of the Aborigines*. Having studied law, he removed to Columbia, South Carolina, where he died about the year 1825.

read the 37th verse of the 2d chapter of the Acts—"Now when they heard this, they were *pickled* in their heart"—the birch stick on Master Stebbins's table seemed to quiver and peel at the little end, as if to give warning of the wrath to come. When Orry Keeler—Orry was a girl, you know, and not a boy—drawled out in spelling: k—o—n, *kon*, s—h—u—n—t—s, *shunts*, *konshunts*—the bristles in the master's eyebrows fidgeted like Aunt Delight's knitting-needles. Occasionally, when the reading was insupportably bad, he took a book and read himself, as an example.

We were taught arithmetic in Daboll, then a new book, and which, being adapted to our measures of length, weight, and currency, was a prodigious leap over the head of poor old Dilworth, whose rules and examples were modeled upon English customs. In consequence of the general use of Dilworth in our schools, for perhaps a century—pounds, shillings, and pence were classical, and dollars and cents vulgar, for several succeeding generations. "I would not give a penny for it," was genteel; "I would not give a cent for it," was plebeian. We have not yet got over this: we sometimes say *red cent* in familiar parlance, but it can hardly be put in print without offense.

Master Stebbins was a great man with a slate and pencil, and I have an idea that we were a generation after his own heart. We certainly achieved wonders according to our own conceptions, some of us going



even beyond the Rule of Three, and making forays into the mysterious region of Vulgar Fractions. Several daring geniuses actually entered and took possession.

But after all, penmanship was Master Stebbins's great accomplishment. He had no magniloquent system; no pompous lessons upon single lines and bifid lines, and the like. The revelations of inspired copy-book makers had not then been vouchsafed to man. He could not cut an American eagle with a single flourish of a goose-quill. He was guided by good taste and native instinct, and wrote a smooth round hand, like copper-plate. His lessons from A to &, all written by himself, consisted of pithy proverbs and useful moral lessons. On every page of our writing-books he wrote the first line himself. The effect was what might have been expected—with such models, patiently enforced, nearly all became good writers.

Beyond these simple elements, the Up-town school made few pretensions. When I was there, two Webster's Grammars and one or two Dwight's Geographies were in use. The latter was without maps or illustrations, and was in fact little more than an expanded table of contents, taken from Morse's Universal Geography—the mammoth monument of American learning and genius of that age and generation. The grammar was a clever book; but I have an idea that neither Master Stebbins nor his pupils ever fathomed its

depths. They floundered about in it, as if in a quagmire, and after some time came out pretty nearly where they went in, though perhaps a little obfuscated by the dim and dusky atmosphere of these labyrinths.

The fact undoubtedly is, that the art of teaching, as now understood, beyond the simplest elements, was neither known nor deemed necessary in our country schools in their day of small things. Repetition, drilling, line upon line, and precept upon precept, with here and there a little of the birch—constituted the entire system.

James G. Carter had not then begun the series of publications, which laid the foundation of the great movement in school education, which afterward pervaded New England. "Bring up a child in the way in which he should go," was the principle; the practice regarded this way as straight and narrow—somewhat like a gun-barrel—and the scholar as a bullet, who was to go ahead, whether he had to encounter a pine board or an oak knot. In climbing up the steep ascent to knowledge, he was expected to rely upon his own genius; a kindly, helping hand along the rough and dubious passages, was rarely extended to him. "Do this!" said the master, with his eye bent on the ferule, and generally the pupil did it, if the matter related to the simpler school

exercises. But when you came to grammar—that was quite another thing.

Let me here repeat an anecdote, which I have indeed told before, but which I had from the lips of its hero, G . . . H . . . , a clergyman of some note thirty years ago, and which well illustrates this part of my story. At a village school, not many miles from Ridgefield, he was put into Webster's Grammar. Here he read, "*A noun is the name of a thing—as horse, hair, justice.*" Now, in his innocence, he read it thus: "*A noun is the name of a thing—as horse-hair justice.*"

"What then," said he, ruminating deeply, "is a noun? But first I must find out what a horse-hair justice is."

Upon this he meditated for some days, but still he was as far as ever from the solution. Now his father was a man of authority in those parts, and moreover he was a justice of the peace. Withal, he was of respectable ancestry, and so there had descended to him a somewhat stately high-backed settee, covered with horse-hair. One day, as the youth came from school, pondering upon the great grammatical problem, he entered the front door of the house, and there he saw before him, his father, officiating in his legal capacity, and seated upon the old horse-hair settee. "I have found it!" said the boy to himself, as greatly delighted as was Archimedes when he exclaimed *Eureka*—"my father is a horse-hair justice, and therefore a noun!"

Nevertheless, it must be admitted that the world got on remarkably well in spite of this narrowness of the country schools. The elements of an English education were pretty well taught throughout the village seminaries of Connecticut, and I may add, of New England. The teachers were heartily devoted to their profession : they respected their calling, and were respected and encouraged by the community. They had this merit, that while they attempted but little, that, at least, was thoroughly performed.

As to the country at large, it was a day of quiet, though earnest action : Franklin's spirit was the great "schoolmaster abroad"—teaching industry, perseverance, frugality, and thrift, as the end and aim of ambition. The education of youth was suited to what was expected of them. With the simple lessons of the country schools, they moved the world immediately around them. Though I can recollect only a single case—that already alluded to of Ezekiel Sanford—in which one of Master Stebbins's scholars attained any degree of literary distinction, still, quite a number of them, with no school learning beyond what he gave them, rose to a certain degree of eminence. His three sons obtained situations in New York as accountants, and became distinguished in their career. At one period there were three graduates of his school, who were cashiers of banks in that city. My mind adverts now with great satisfac-

tion to several names among the wealthy, honorable, and still active merchants of the great metropolis, who were my fellow-students of the Up-town school, and who there began and completed their education. I will venture to name another—Rufus H. King, of Albany, who was my competitor in every study, and my friend in every play. May I not be permitted to add that he has ever been, and still is, my friend? As a man, he is precisely what he promised to be as Master Stebbins's pupil. I know he will excuse me for thus speaking of him in behalf of our revered old schoolmaster, to whose character and memory I can inscribe no more worthy monument than this reference to his pupils.

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## LETTER XII.

*Horsemanship—Bige's Adventures—A Dead Shot—A Race—Academical Honors—Charles Chatterbox—My Father's School—My Exercises in Latin—Tityre tu patula, etc.—Rambles—Literary Aspirations—My Mother—Family Worship—Standing and Kneeling at Prayer—Anecdotes—Our Philistine Temple.*

MY DEAR C\*\*\*\*\*

Permit me a few more details as to my school-day recollections. I went steadily to the Up-town school for three winters, being occupied during the summers upon the farm, and in various minor duties.

I was a great deal on horseback, often carrying messages to the neighboring towns of Reading, Wilton, Weston, and Lower Salem, for then the post-routes were few, and the mails, which were weekly, crept like snails over hill and valley. I became a bold rider at an early age; before I was eight years old, I frequently ventured to put a horse to his speed, and that, too, without a saddle. A person who has never tried it, can hardly conceive of the wild delight of riding a swift horse—when he lays down his ears, tosses his tail in air, and stretches himself out in a full race. The change which the creature undergoes, in passing from an ordinary gait into a run, is felt by the rider to be a kind of sudden inspiration, which triumphs like wings over the dull, dragging laws of gravitation. The intense energy of the beast's movements, the rush of the air, the swimming backward of lands, houses, and trees, with the clattering thunder of the hoofs—all convey to the rider a fierce ecstasy, which, perhaps, nothing else can give. About this period, however, I received a lesson, which lasted me a lifetime.

You must know that Deacon Benedict, one of our neighbors, had a fellow living with him, named Abijah. He was an adventurous youth, and more than once led me into tribulation. I remember that on one occasion I went with him to shoot a dog that was said to worry the deacon's sheep. It was night, and dark as Egypt, but Bige said he could see the

creature, close to the cow-house, back of the barn. He banged away, and then jumped over the fence, to pick up the game. After a time he came back, but said not a word. Next morning it was found that he had shot the brindled cow; mistaking a white spot in her forehead for the dog, he had taken deadly aim, and put the whole charge into her pate. Fortunately her skull was thick and the shot small, so the honest creature was only a little cracked. Bige, however, was terribly scolded by the deacon, who was a justice of the peace, and had a deep sense of the importance of his duties. I came in for a share of blame, though I was only a looker-on. Bige said the deacon called me a "parsnip scrimmage," but more probably it was a *particeps criminis*.

But to proceed. One day I was taking home from the pasture, a horse that belonged to some clergyman—I believe Dr. Ripley, of Greensfarms. Just as I came upon the level ground in front of Jerry Mead's old house, Bige came up behind me on the deacon's mare—an ambling brute with a bushy tail and shaggy mane. As he approached, he gave a chirrup, and my horse, half in fright and half in fun, bounded away, like Tam O'Shanter's mare. Every hair in the creature's tail and mane stood out, as if spinning with electricity. Away we went, I holding on as well as I could, for the animal was round as a barrel. He was no doubt used to a frolic of this sort, although he belonged to a D. D., and looked as if he believed in total deprav-



ity. When he finally broke into a run, he flew like the wind, at the same time bounding up and down with a tearing energy, quite frightful to think of. After a short race, he went from under me, and I came with a terrible shock to the ground.

The breath was knocked out of me for some seconds, and as I recovered it with a gasping effort, my sensations were indescribably agonizing. Greatly humbled, and sorely bruised, I managed to get home, where the story of my adventure had preceded me. I was severely lectured by my parents, which, however, I might have forgotten, had not the concussion entered into my bones, and made an indelible impression upon my memory, thus perpetuating the wholesome counsel.

When I was about twelve years old, a man by the name of Sackett was employed to keep a high-school, or, as it was then called, an Academy. Here I went irregularly for a few weeks, and at a public exhibition I remember to have spoken a piece upon a stage fitted up in the meeting-house, entitled "Charles Chatterbox." Irad Hawley, Rufus H. King, and Sally Ingersoll, played Hagar and Ishmael. This was the substance of my achievements at Sackett's seminary.

The narrowness of my father's income, and the needs of a large family, induced him to take half a dozen pupils to be fitted for college. This he continued for a series of years. Some of his scholars

came from New Haven, some from Danbury, and some from other places. I may remark, in passing, that a number of these—some of whom are still living—distinguished themselves in various liberal pursuits. It might seem natural that I should have shared in these advantages; but, in the first place, my only and elder brother, Charles A. Goodrich—now widely known by his numerous useful publications—had been destined for the clerical profession, partly by his own predilection, partly by encouragement from a relative, and partly too from an idea that his somewhat delicate constitution forbade a more hardy career. To this may doubtless be added the natural desire of his parents that at least one of their sons should follow the honored calling to which father, grandfather, and great-grandfather had been devoted. Hence, he was put in training for college. The expenses to be thus incurred were formidable enough to my parents, without adding to them, by attempting any thing of the kind for me. And besides, I had manifested no love of study, and evidently preferred action to books. Moreover, it must be remembered that I was regarded as a born carpenter, and it would have seemed a tempting of Providence to have set me upon any other career. So, with perfect content on my part, from the age of twelve to fourteen, I was chiefly employed in active services about the house and farm. I could read, write, and cipher; this was sufficient for my ambi-

tion, and satisfactory to my parents, in view of the life to which I was apparently destined.

Nevertheless, though my school exercises were such as I have described, I doubtless gathered some little odds and ends of learning about those days, beyond the range of my horn-books. I heard a good deal of conversation from the clergymen who visited us, and above all, I listened to the long discourses of Lieutenant Smith upon matters and things in general. My father, too, had a brother in Congress, from whom he received letters, documents, and messages, all of which became subjects of discussion. I remember furthermore, that out of some childish imitation, I thumbed over Corderius and Erasmus—the first Latin books, then constantly in the hands of my father's pupils. I was so accustomed to hear them recite their lessons in Virgil, that

*Tityre tu patulæ recubans sub tegmine fagi—*

and

*Arma, arms—virumque, and the man—cano, I sing—*

were as familiar to my ears as *hillery, tillery, zachery zan*, and probably conveyed to my mind about as much meaning. Even the first lesson in Greek—

Εν, in—ἀρχῇ, the beginning—ἦν, was—ὁ λόγος, the Word—

was also among the cabalistic jingles in my memory. All this may seem nothing as a matter of education; still, some years after, while I was an appren-

tice in Hartford, feeling painfully impressed with the scantiness of my knowledge, I borrowed some Latin school-books, under the idea of attempting to master that language. To my delight and surprise, I found that they seemed familiar to me. Thus encouraged, I began, and bending steadily over my task at evening, when my day's duties were over, I made my way nearly through the Latin Grammar and the first two books of Virgil's *Æneid*. In my poverty of knowledge, even these acquisitions became useful to me.

From the age of twelve to fifteen, in the midst of my activity, I still lived largely upon dreams. Nothing could be more ludicrous than the extravagance of these, except it might be their vividness and seeming reality, in contrast to all the probabilities of my condition. Though generally occupied in the various tasks assigned me, I still found a good deal of time to ramble over the country. Whole days I spent in the long, lonesome lanes that wound between Ridgefield and Salem; in the half-cultivated, half-wooded hills that lay at the foot of West Mountain, and in the deep recesses of the wild and rugged regions beyond. I frequently climbed to the top of the cliffs and ridges that rose one above another, and having gained the crown of the mountain, cast long and wistful glances over the blue vale that stretched out for many miles to the westward. I had always my gun in hand, and though not insensible to any sport that might fall in my way, I was more

absorbed in the fancies that came thronging to my imagination. I had a love of solitary and even desolate scenes: there seemed to be in me an appetite that found satisfaction in the wild and precipitous passes of the wilderness. This, after an absence of a few weeks, would return like hunger and thirst, and I felt a longing for the places which appeased it. Thus I became familiar with the whole country around, and especially with the shaded glens and gorges of West Mountain. I must add that these had, besides their native, savage charms, a sort of fascination from being the residence of a strange woman, who had devoted herself to solitude, and was known under the name of the *Hermitess*. This personage—whom I shall hereafter describe more particularly—I had occasionally seen in our village, and I frequently met her as she glided through the forests, while I was pursuing my mountain rambles. I sometimes felt a strange thrill as she passed, but this only seemed to render the recesses where she dwelt still more inviting.

Of all the seasons, autumn was to me the most pleasing. Even late in November, when the leaves had fallen and were driven about in eddies by the hollow winds—the tall trees creaking and moaning aloft—the remote and solitary wilds had their fascination. There was in me certainly none of the misanthropic feeling which made Byron fall in love with such scenes. Nevertheless, some passages in

Childe Harold, which appeared a few years after, described the emotions I then experienced, and gave full expression to the struggling but imprisoned thoughts which filled my bosom. It is one of the highest offices of the poet to furnish words for the deep, yet unspoken poetry of the soul. Certainly no language of mine can express the delight with which I have read and re-read the following stanza, and which has ever seemed to me like unsealing a mystic fountain in my bosom—that has since flowed on in a stream of pleasing associations.

“To sit on rocks, to muse o’er flood and fell,  
To slowly trace the forest’s shady scene,  
Where things that own not man’s dominion dwell,  
And mortal foot hath ne’er or rarely been—  
To climb the trackless mountain, all unseen,  
With the wild flock that never needs a fold—  
Alone o’er steeps and pouring falls to lean :  
This is not solitude ; ’tis but to hold  
Converse with nature’s charms, and view her stores unroll’d.”

I must repeat that however much I was attracted by these wild and lonesome scenes, and however I may have felt a tinge of melancholy in my solitary walks, I had no feeling of unhappiness, no oppressive sense of isolation, no anxiety, no *ennui*. It is true that at such times, there came to me scraps of solemn poetry from Milton, Young, and Watts, of which my mother’s mind was full, and which she loved to repeat. These broke in snatches upon my memory, and

served as lightning-rods to conduct to my lips some of the burning emotions of my breast. I remember often to have repeated them, half aloud, while I was in the woods, though doubtless without having any very exact appreciation of their meaning, or the slightest regard to any fitness of application. I could not then write a reliable line of sense or grammar; still, among my fancies I planned poems, and even dreamed of literary fame. Such I was in fact to my own consciousness, while at the same time I was regarded by all around as a rather thoughtless, though happy boy, with a genius for whittling.

I have no doubt that I inherited from my mother a love of the night side of nature—not a love that begets melancholy, but an appetite that found pleasure in the shadows as well as the lights of life and imagination. Eminently practical as she was—laborious, skillful, and successful in the duties which Providence had assigned her, as the head of a large family, with narrow means—she was still of a poetic temperament. Her lively fancy was vividly set forth by a pair of the finest eyes I have ever seen—dark and serious, yet tender and sentimental. These bespoke not only the vigor of her conceptions, but the melancholy tinge that shaded her imagination. Sometimes indeed the well of sadness in her heart became full, and it ran over in tears. These, however, were like spring showers—brief in duration, and afterward brightening to all around. She was not the only woman who



has felt better after a good cry. It was, in fact, a poetic, not a real sorrow, that thus excited her emotions, for her prevailing humor abounded in wit and vivacity, not unfrequently taking the hue of playful satire. Nevertheless, her taste craved the pathetic, the mournful—not as a bitter medicine, but a spicy condiment. Her favorite poets were King David and Dr. Watts: she preferred the dirge-like melody of Windham to all other music. All the songs she sang were minors. Alas! how few are now living to verify this feeble portrait—among the cloud of witnesses who would once have testified to the general, though inadequate resemblance!

You will gather from what I have said that my father not only prayed in his family night and morning; but before breakfast, and immediately after the household was assembled, he always read a chapter in the sacred volume. In our family Bible it is recorded that he thus read that holy book through, in course, thirteen times, in the space of about five and twenty years. He was an excellent reader, having a remarkably clear, frank, hearty voice, so that I was deeply interested, and thus early became familiar with almost every portion of the Old and New Testament. The narrative passages seized most readily upon my attention, and formed the greater part of my early knowledge. The direct, simple style of the Bible entered into my heart, and became for a long time my standard of taste in literary composition. It cost

me a real struggle, long afterward, to relish the magniloquence of such writers as Johnson, despite the smack of Latin and Greek in its composition, and the ponderous force of thought which it conveyed.

The practice of family worship, as I before stated, was at this time very general in New England. In Ridgefield, it was not altogether confined to the strictly religious—to clergymen, deacons, and church members. It was a custom which decency hardly allowed to be omitted. No family was thought to go on well without it. There is a good story which well describes this trait of manners.

Somewhere in Vermont, in this golden age, there was a widow by the name of Bennett. In consequence of the death of her husband, the charge of a large farm and an ample household devolved upon her. Her husband had been a pious man, and all things had prospered with him. His widow, alike from religious feeling and affectionate regard for his memory, desired that every thing should be conducted as much as possible as it had been during his lifetime. Especially did she wish the day to begin and close with family worship.

Now she had a foreman on the farm by the name of Ward. He was a good man for work, but faith had not yet touched his lips, much less his heart. In vain did the widow, in admitting his merits at the plow, the scythe, and the flail, still urge him to crown her wishes by leading in family prayer. For a long

time the heart of the man was hard, and his ear deaf to her entreaties. At last, however, wearied with her importunities, he seemed to change, and to her great joy, consented to make a trial.

On a bright morning in June—at early sunrise—the family were all assembled in the parlor, men and maidens, for their devotions. When all was ready, Ward, in a low, troubled voice, began. He had never prayed—or at least not in public—but he had heard many prayers, and possessed a retentive memory. After getting over the first hesitancy, he soon became fluent, and taking passages here and there from the various petitions he had heard—Presbyterian, Methodist, Universalist, and Episcopalian—he went on with great eloquence, gradually elevating his tone and accelerating his delivery. Ere long his voice grew portentous, and some of the men and maids, thinking he was suddenly taken either mad or inspired, stole out on their toes into the kitchen, where, with gaping mouths, they awaited the result. The Widow Bennett bore it all for about half an hour; but at last, as the precious time was passing away, she lost patience, and sprang to her feet. Placing herself directly in front of the speaker, she exclaimed, “Ward, what do you mean?”

As if suddenly relieved from a nightmare, he exclaimed, “Oh dear, ma’am—I’m much obliged to you—for I couldn’t contrive to wind off.”

I hope you will not feel that this anecdote par-

takes of a license unworthy of these annals, for as you see, it has an historical foundation, as well as a practical moral. I regret to leave a doubt in regard to one of the details, and that is, that I have not been able to determine whether on this occasion the family stood up, leaning over the backs of their chairs, or knelt before the seats. The former was the custom in my younger days, Puritanism perhaps not having overcome the fear of imitating the soul-endangering practices of prelacy, whether belonging to Mother Church of England or the Scarlet Lady of Rome. Perhaps, too, the fatigue of standing was deemed an acceptable sacrifice: I say fatigue, for in those days, men gifted in prayer were like the ocean—so deep in spots that it required a very long line to reach the bottom. Deacon Cooke, of Danbury, a very sensible and pious man, by the way, once said that he did not believe the spirit of prayer could be sustained, on ordinary occasions, for more than five minutes at a time. This, however, was rank heresy then, and was not understood or approved till fifty years after. Granther Baldwin was a better representative of the age I am speaking of: beginning at the Creation, and coming down to the Fall, he would go on through Babel, Babylon, and Balaam, the landing of the Pilgrims, Braddock's defeat, and the Declaration of Independence. These things, added to local matters, usually consumed half an hour at the evening exercises. After a hard day's work—especially in summer time

—it required a strong understanding to endure it. John Benedict, then paying his addresses to Esther Baldwin, whom he afterward married, one night fell asleep over his chair, at prayer-time, and pitching forward against Granther Baldwin, overturned both him and his devotions. John barely escaped being forbidden ever to enter the house again; indeed, he stayed away some weeks, and only returned upon Esther's going after him.

This happened near the beginning of the present century: some five and twenty years later, kneeling at family prayers had become common in Connecticut. A similar change had also begun in meeting-house worship. At the present time, it is common for people in Congregational churches even, to kneel at prayer-time. I am not able to state, authoritatively, the reason for this change, though I presume, as just intimated, it has arisen from the gradual wearing away of the Puritan prejudice against kneeling. If this be correct, it indicates an important fact, which is, that sectarian differences, especially those of mere form, have greatly subsided of late years. It is in respect to these, that there have been the most bitter contentions; the movement here noticed has, therefore, in all its bearings, the significance of a real reform.

It is stated that when the first Congress assembled at Philadelphia, September, 1774, the members, duly impressed with the solemnity of the occasion, nat-

urally desired the aid of religious exercises, and therefore the appointment of a chaplain was proposed. But considering that the persons present were of various creeds, it was feared that they could not unite in the choice of a clergyman to fulfill the duties of such an office. The difficulty was, however, happily removed by Samuel Adams, of Massachusetts, who, although a rigid Congregationalist, proposed the appointment of an Episcopalian, and Dr. Duché, a popular preacher of Philadelphia, was immediately chosen. It must have been an interesting scene—a minister, bound to forms, finding extemporaneous words to suit the occasion, and the Quaker, the Presbyterian, the Episcopalian, and the Rationalist—some kneeling, some standing, but all praying, and looking to Heaven for wisdom and counsel, in this hour of doubt, anxiety, and responsibility. Here is a worthy subject\* for the pencil of Weir, Powell, Huntington, Healy, Page, Terry, Rossiter, or some other of our historical painters. Adams and Sherman, the Puritans, standing erect; Thompson, the Quaker, finding the movement of the Spirit in the words of a consecrated priest; with Washington, Henry, and other Episcopalians, kneeling, according to their creed, and all invoking wisdom from above—would make a touching and instructive picture. Its moral would be, that

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\* I understand that this subject—"The First Prayer in Congress"—has been painted and engraved, but not in the style suited to a great national subject.



the greatest minds, in moments of difficulty and danger, acknowledge their dependence upon God, and feel the necessity of elevating and purifying their hearts by prayer; and that the differences of sect, the distinctions of form, all vanish when emergency presses upon the consciences of men, and forces them to a sincere and open avowal of their convictions.

In looking back to this period, and remembering the impassable gulfs that lay between Christian sects, it is gratifying to observe what is now witnessed every Sabbath in our principal cities—the Episcopalian, while maintaining his creed and his forms, still receiving to his communion-table the Presbyterian, the Methodist, the Congregationalist, the Unitarian, the Universalist—all who profess to be followers of Christ, while these sectarians exercise a similar charity in return. Is not this progress—is not this reform? How much is meant by these simple facts—the communion-table of Christ extended; the heart of man expanded, purified, ennobled!

I must not pass over another incident in my memory, and having reference to the topic in hand. Under the biblical influence of these days, my father's scholars built a temple of the Philistines, and when it was completed within and without, all the children round about assembled, as did the Gazaites of old. The edifice was chiefly of boards, slenderly constructed, and reached the height of twelve feet; nevertheless, all of us got upon it, according to the 16th



chapter of Judges. The oldest of the scholars played Samson. When all was ready, he took hold of the pillars of the temple—one with his right hand and one with his left. “Let me die with the Philistines!” said he, and bowing himself, down we came in a heap! Strange to say, nobody but Samson was hurt, and he only in some skin bruises. If you could see him now—dignified even to solemnity, and seldom condescending to any but the gravest matters—you would scarcely believe the story, even though I write it and verify it. Nevertheless, if he must have played, he should have taken the part of Samson, for he is one of the most gifted men I have ever known.

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## LETTER XIII.

*My Father's Library—Children's Books—The New England Primer and Westminster Catechism—Toy Books—Nursery Books—Moral Effect of these—Hannah More's Moral Repository—The Shepherd of Salisbury Plain—Visit to Barley-wood—First Idea of the Parley Books—Impressions of Big Books and Little Books—A Comparison of the Old Books and the New Books for Children and Youth—A Modern Juvenile Bookstore in Broadway.*

MY DEAR C\*\*\*\*\*

You will readily comprehend from what I have said, that up to the age of ten or twelve years, I had made little acquaintance with literature. Beyond my school-books, I had read almost nothing.

My father had a considerable library, but it consisted mostly of theology, a great deal of it in Latin, and in large folios. Into such a forbidding mass, I never penetrated, save only that I sometimes dipped into a big volume, which happened to be in large print. This was in English, and was, I suspect, some discussion of Calvin's Five Points; still it attracted my attention, and sometimes, especially of a rainy day, when I could hear the big drops thump upon the shingles over my head—for the library was in the second loft, and led by an open stairway to the attic—I read whole pages of this book aloud, spelling out the large words as well as I could. I did not understand a sentence of it, but I was fascinated with the fair large type. This circumstance I have never forgotten, and it should not be overlooked by those who make books for children, for in this case, I was but a representative of others of my age.

It is difficult now, in this era of literary affluence, almost amounting to surfeit, to conceive of the poverty of books suited to children in the days of which I write. Except the New England Primer—the main contents of which were the Westminster Catechism—and some rhymes, embellished with hideous cuts of Adam's Fall, in which "we sinned all;" the apostle and a cock crowing at his side, to show that "Peter denies his Lord and cries;" Nebuchadnezzar crawling about like a hog, the bristles sticking out of his back, and the like—I remember none that were in general use

among my companions. When I was about ten years old, my father brought from Hartford, Gaffer Ginger, Goody Two Shoes, and some of the rhymes and jingles, now collected under the name of Mother Goose, —with perhaps a few other toy books of that day. These were a revelation. Of course I read them, but I must add with no real relish.

Somewhat later one of my companions lent me a volume containing the stories of Little Red Riding Hood, Puss in Boots, Blue Beard, Jack the Giant-killer, and some other of the tales of horror, commonly put into the hands of youth, as if for the express purpose of reconciling them to vice and crime. Some children, no doubt, have a ready appetite for these monstrosities, but to others they are revolting, until by repetition and familiarity, the taste is sufficiently degraded to relish them. At all events, they were shocking to me. Even Little Red Riding Hood, though it seized strongly upon my imagination, excited in me the most painful impressions. I believed it to be true; at least it was told with the air of truth, and I regarded it as a picture of life. I imagined that what happened to the innocent child of the cottage, might happen to me and to others. I recollect, while the impression was fresh in my mind, that on going to bed, I felt a creeping horror come over me, as the story recurred to my imagination. As I dwelt upon it, I soon seemed to see the hideous jaws of a wolf coming out of the bedclothes, and approach-

ing as if to devour me. My disposition was not timid, but the reverse; yet at last I became so excited, that my mother was obliged to tell me that the story was a mere fiction.

"It is not true, then?" said I.

"No," said my mother, "it is not true."

"Why do they tell such falsehoods, then?" I replied.

"They are not falsehoods, because they are not intended to deceive. They are mere tales invented to amuse children."

"Well, they don't amuse me!"

I do not remember the rest of the conversation: this general impression, however, remained on my mind, that children's books were either full of nonsense, like "hie diddle diddle" in Mother Goose, or full of something very like lies, and those very shocking to the mind, like Little Red Riding Hood. From that time my interest in them was almost wholly lost. I had read Puss in Boots, but that seemed to me without meaning, unless it was to teach us that a Good Genius may cheat, lie, and steal; in other words, that in order to show gratitude to a friend, we may resort to every kind of meanness and fraud. I never liked cats, and to make one of that race—sly, thieving, and bloodthirsty by instinct—the personification of virtue, inclined me, so far as the story produced any moral effect, to hate virtue itself.

The story of Blue Beard made a stronger and still

more painful impression upon me. Though I knew it to be a fiction, it was still in some sort a reality to me. His castle, with its hideous chamber hung with the ghastly corpses of his murdered wives, was more a living truth in my imagination, than any fact in history or geography. In spite of my efforts to cast it out, it remained with all its horrors—a dreadful burden upon my mind.

Still worse was the story of Jack the Giant-killer. He, too, was a good genius, but of course—according to the taste of this species of composition—a great liar. One should feel sympathy with such a gallant little fellow, especially in combating giants like Blunderbore, whose floor was covered with human skulls, and whose daintiest food consisted of “men’s hearts, seasoned with pepper and vinegar!” Surely—such is the moral of the tale—we must learn to forgive, nay, to love and approve, wickedness—lying, deception, and murder—when they are employed for good and beneficent purposes! At least, the weak may use any weapons against the strong: the little may conspire against the great; and in such a contest, all weapons are lawful and laudable.

How far this supper of horrors familiarized my own mind with violence, and thus defaced that moral sense, which is common in children—leading them to prefer the good, the true, and the beautiful, if it be duly cherished—I cannot venture to say. How far this potent but wicked logic of example, this argument

of action—vividly wrought into the imagination and the mind—in favor of meanness, deception, and crime, served to abate the natural love of truth and honor in my bosom, I do not pretend to conjecture. Doubtless, I suffered less, because my taste was shocked; still, the “evil communications” were in my soul. Had it not been for the constant teaching of rectitude, by precept and example, in the conduct of my parents, I might, to say the least, have been seriously injured. In looking back, and judging of the matter now, I believe it would certainly have been so. As it was, these things were fearful temptations, and I am convinced that much of the vice and crime in the world are to be imputed to these atrocious books put into the hands of children, and bringing them down, with more or less efficiency, to their own debased moral standard.

That such tales should be invented and circulated in a barbarous age, I can easily conceive; that they should even be acceptable to the coarse tastes and rude feelings of society, where all around is a system of wrong, duplicity, and violence, is not a matter of surprise. But that they should be put into the hands of children, and by Christian parents, and that too in an age of light and refinement—excites in me the utmost wonder.

The common opinion, no doubt, is, that they are at least amusing; that at the same time they are too improbable on the very face to carry with them any

moral effect. This is a double mistake. The love of the horrible, the monstrous, the grotesque, is not indigenous to the youthful mind—unless it may be in certain anomalous cases. There are children, as I have said, who seem to be born with a proclivity to evil. There are others, who, from the unhappy influence of malign example, seem to show an early development of debased tastes. But in general the child revolts at these things, and it is not till it is broken in by repetition, till it is reconciled by familiarity, that it begins to crave them. A child loves at once a kitten, a chicken, a doll—the innocent semblances of itself; but will usually fly into a passion of repugnance at the sight of any thing monstrous in nature or art.

The idea that familiarity with crime is harmless, is equally at variance with experience. The Bible is full of warnings against the deadly effect of bad ideas communicated by example. Common sense—the first instinct of reason—tells us not to take children into scenes of crime and bloodshed, unless we wish to debase them. There is little difference, as to moral effect upon children, between things real and things imaginary. All that is strongly conceived by the young, is reality to them. The tale of Jack the Giant-killer in the book, is very much the same as would be the incidents of the story acted out at the theater, or the reality performed before the eye. In all these cases, it fills the mind with evil, and commends



evil, by inevitable influence. Is it not leading children into fearful temptation, to put such works as these into their hands? It will be understood that I am here speaking more particularly of nursery books. These, from the impressibility of young children, and from the fact that the judgment is not yet developed and exercises little control over the mind—produce a most powerful effect. Yet it is only for such that the books referred to have been framed, as if, in a diabolical spirit of mischief, at once to deprave the taste, and degrade the intellect of childhood.

At a somewhat later date—that is, when I was about twelve years old—I read Robinson Crusoe, which greatly delighted me. The work had about a dozen engravings, in which Crusoe and his man Friday were depicted somewhat like two black spiders: nevertheless, my imagination endued them with charms equal to those of Heath's Book of Beauty in after times. About this period, I met with Alphonso and Dalinda, a translation of one of Madame de Genlis' Tales of the Castle. I have never seen it since, but I judge by its effect upon my imagination, that it must be written with great skill and knowledge of the youthful mind. The manner in which a series of romantic and wonderful incidents are philosophically explained, seemed to me exceedingly felicitous, and certainly gave me my first glimpses of some of the more curious marvels of Natural History and Natural Philosophy.

From this point I made my way into works designed for adults, and now began to read voyages, travels, and histories. Thus a new world was within my reach, though as yet I did not realize it. About this time I met with Hannah More's Moral Repository, which, so far as I recollect, was the first work that I read with real enthusiasm. That I devoured. The story of the Shepherd of Salisbury Plain was to me only inferior to the Bible narrative of Joseph and his brethren. Twenty years after, I enjoyed the pleasure, I might almost say ecstasy, of passing over the scene of this inimitable story, and of telling my experience to the author at Barley-wood. It was in conversation with that amiable and gifted person, that I first formed the conception of the Parley Tales—the general idea of which was to make nursery books reasonable and truthful, and thus to feed the young mind upon things wholesome and pure, instead of things monstrous, false, and pestilent: that we should use the same prudence in giving aliment to the mind and soul, as to the body; and as we would not give blood and poison as food for the latter, we should not administer cruelty and violence, terror and impurity, to the other. In short, that the elements of nursery books should consist of beauty instead of deformity, goodness instead of wickedness, decency instead of vulgarity.

So far as I can recollect, the work just alluded to first gave me a taste for reading, and awakened my

mind to some comprehension of the amazing scope and power of books. I had heard the Bible read from beginning to end, and the narrative portions had attracted my attention and deeply interested me. I had heard scraps of poetry and passages of prose, quoted and recited by my mother and my sisters older than myself and who had been well educated, mostly at New Haven. I had heard abundance of learned conversation among doctors of divinity and doctors of laws, who, with others, visited my father's house; and finally I had heard the disquisitions, historical, biblical, and philosophical, of our profound and erudite village oracle, Lieutenant Smith; yet I do not recollect to have discovered, before this time, that books contained inexhaustible sources of instruction and amusement, and all within my own reach. I had listened to what I heard, though often impatiently, and doubtless I had picked up and pocketed, here and there, an idea. Such, however, had been the course of my life, or such was my disposition, or such the books that had fallen into my hands, that I regarded big books as tasks, proper for the learned, but not fit for such as me; and little books as nonsense, or worse than nonsense, worthy only of contempt or aversion. What a real blessing would then have been to me the juvenile works of Mrs. Child, the little histories of Agnes Strickland, the tales of Mary Howitt, Mrs. Hoffland, and other similar works, so familiar to children now.

As to schoolbooks, those I had used had become associated in my memory with sitting three hours at a time upon hard oak benches, my legs all the while in such a cramped position that I could almost have kicked my best friend by way of relief.

In casting my mind backward over the last thirty years—and comparing the past with the present, duly noting the amazing advances made in every thing which belongs to the comfort, the intelligence, the luxury of society—there is no point in which these are more striking than in the books for children and youth. Let any one who wishes to comprehend this matter, go to such a juvenile bookstore as that of C. S. Francis, in Broadway, New York, and behold the teeming shelves—comprising almost every topic within the range of human knowledge, treated in a manner to please the young mind, by the use of every attraction of style and every art of embellishment—and let him remember that nineteen twentieths of these works have come into existence within the last thirty years. He will then see how differently this age estimates the importance of juvenile instruction, from any other that has gone before it.

## LETTER XIV.

*The Clergymen of Fairfield County—The Minister's House a Minister's Tavern—Dr. Ripley, of Green's-farms—Dr. Lewis, of Horseneck—Dr. Burnett, of Norwalk—Mr. Swan—Mr. Noyes—Mr. Elliott, of Fairfield—Mr. Mitchell, of New Canaan—A Poet-Deacon—Dr. Blatchford, the Clairvoyant—Mr. Bartlett, of Reading—Mr. Camp, of Ridgebury—Mr. Smith, of Stamford—Mr. Waterman, of Bridgeport, &c.—Manners of the Clergy of Fairfield County—Their Character—Anecdote of the Laughing D. D.—The Coming Storm.*

MY DEAR C\*\*\*\*\*

Before I complete my narrative, so far as it relates to Ridgefield, I should state that in the olden time a country minister's home was a minister's tavern, and therefore I saw, at different periods, most of the orthodox or Congregational clergymen belonging to that part of the State, at our house. My father frequently exchanged with those of the neighboring towns, and sometimes consociations and associations were held at Ridgefield. Thus, men of the clerical profession constituted a large portion of the strangers who visited us. I may add that my lineage was highly ministerial from an early period down to my own time. The pulpit of Durham, filled by my paternal grandfather, continued in the same family one hundred and twenty-six consecutive years. A short time since, we reckoned among our relations, not going beyond the degree of second cousin, more than a dozen ministers of the Gospel, and all of the same creed.

As to the clergy of Fairfield county, my boyish impressions of them were, that they were of the salt of the earth—rock-salt, the very crystals of Christianity; nor has a larger experience altered my opinion. If I sometimes indulge a smile at the recollection of particular traits of character, or more general points of manners significant of the age, I still regard them with affection and reverence. Some of them were grave and portly, especially those who bore the awe-inspiring title of Doctors of Divinity. I cannot now recollect among them all a single little or emaciated D. D. At the very head of the list, in my imagination, was Dr. Ripley, of Green's-farms, now Southport, I believe. He was a large and learned man—two hundred pounds avoirdupois of solid divinity. He read the Bible in the original tongues for diversion, and digested Hebrew roots as if they had been buttered parsnips. He was withal a hale, hearty old gentleman, with a rich, ruddy smile over his face, bespeaking peace within and without. I was once at his house, which commanded a fine view of Long Island Sound, and particularly of Compo Bay, which was near at hand. I remember that he told me about the landing of the British there, under Tryon, in April, 1777, on their expedition against Danbury—a story in which I took deep interest, for I had already heard a good deal concerning it from Lieut. Smith.

Dr. Lewis, of Horseneck, weighed less according to the steelyards: he had perhaps less Greek and Latin

in him, but I have an impression that he was a man even more full of godliness. He was in fact the patron saint of my young fancy, and his image still seems before me. He was of the middle size, neither fat nor lean, stooped a little, and had a thin face with a long nose. Yet his countenance was the very seat of kindness, charity, and sanctity. His thin, white locks floated down his cheeks and over his shoulders in apostolic folds. His voice was soft, yet penetrating. He had not, I think, any prodigious power of intellect, but during his preaching every ear was intent, every heart open. The congregation sometimes nodded, especially of a hot summer Sunday, even beneath the thunders of Dr. Ripley; nay, Deacon Olmsted himself, enthroned in the deacon's seat, was obliged now and then to take out his sprig of fennel, in the very midst of the doctor's twelfthlies and fifteenthlies; but nobody ever slept under the touching and sympathetic tones of Dr. Lewis. The good man has long since been translated to another world, but the perfume of his goodness still lingers amid the churches which were once impressed with his footsteps.

Among the other clerical celebrities of this period was Dr. Burnett, of Norwalk—a man of distinguished ability, but of whom I have only a faint remembrance. His successor, Mr. Swan, was one of the most eloquent men of the day. I shall never forget a certain passage in one of his addresses at an evening meeting. He had taken as a motto for his discourse



—"Choose you this day whom ye will serve." Josh. xxiv. 15. Having pressed upon the audience the necessity of deciding whether they would serve God or the Adversary, he adverted to an anecdote in ancient history, in which an ambassador to some foreign state—demanding a decision of the government in a question under discussion—drew a line upon the earth with his staff, and said, "Tell me—here, this very hour—*now*—where will you stand, on this side or that, for us or against us? Shall it be peace or shall it be war?" Mr. Swan was a tall man, and as he said this, he seemed to mark the line upon the ground with a solemn sweep of his long arm. He then added, addressing the audience in tones that thrilled and awed every heart, "Tell me here, this very hour, *now*—where will you stand? Where will you stand to-night—where at the day of judgment—on this side or that—for God or against Him? Shall it be peace or war? peace forever, or war through the measureless ages of eternity?" I can recall no eloquence—and I have heard the most celebrated orators of my time—which produced a more deep, fearful, and startling emotion, than this.

There was another minister—the very antipode of the one I have just described, and yet a great and good man in his way—great and good in the effect of his life. His name was Noyes, and he was settled at Weston. He was a person of moderate intellect, yet his benignant face and kindly voice suggested to

the imagination that disciple whom Jesus loved. His whole conduct was but a fulfillment of what his countenance promised. Mr. Elliot, of Fairfield, I do not recollect personally, but I have heard about his preaching against the New Lights—the Methodists and revivalists—who then began to disturb the quiet of orthodoxy. He asserted that, “as in nature it is the mizzling, fizzling rain, and not the overwhelming torrent, that fertilizes the fields, so in religion, it is the quiet dew of the Holy Spirit that produces the harvest of souls.” I give the story and the words as I heard them.

Mr. Mitchell, of New Canaan, was a man of ability and influence, but I remember more of his successors than of him. There being a vacancy in the parish, the people tried several candidates—one named Hough, one named Hyde, &c.; but none of them suited everybody. At last came Mr. Bonney. “Well,” said one of the deacons as if by inspiration—

“We have now had Hough and Hyde,  
Let us take Bonney and ride.”

This from the lips of a deacon sounded like prophecy, and so Mr. Bonney was duly called and installed.

Mr. Fisher, of Wilton, was of comely and imposing presence, and withal an able man. As was proper, he became a D. D. Mr. Dwight, of Greenfield Hill, was afterward the renowned President of Yale College. I shall have occasion to speak of him again.

Mr. Humphries, of Fairfield, became President of Amherst College, and is now living at Pittsfield, enjoying at the age of seventy-seven, the full vigor of manhood—with an enviable reputation as a ripe scholar, an eloquent preacher, a good and great man, combining the dignity of the divine with the amiable and attractive qualities of the friend, the citizen, and the neighbor.

Dr. Blatchford, of Bridgeport, removed early to Waterford, near Troy, N. Y., and I can only remember to have seen him; his personal appearance has vanished from my mind. I recollect, however, that he had a horror of cats and kittens, and such was its intensity as to endue him with clairvoyance, so that he could easily detect one of these creatures in the room, though it might be out of sight or even confined in a closet. Frequent attempts were made to deceive him, but without success. His instinct was infallible. When he was seen coming, the first thing attended to by my mother was to shut up the whole purring family, and they were kept under lock and key till the good doctor had departed. Once upon a time, while dining with a friend, he suddenly threw down his knife and fork, his face being pale with horror.

“What is the matter?” ejaculated his host, in great excitement.

“It is a cat!” said the doctor, in a hollow voice.

“A cat?” was the thrilling reply. “Impossible:

we were particular to shut up the cat and kittens as soon as you came."

"I say there's a cat in the room!" said the doctor, with fearful emphasis.

A hurry-scurry ensued, and after a long search, a kitten was found slumbering in the cradle, under the clothes, and snuggled down beside the baby!

There were, furthermore, Mr. Bartlett, of Reading, an animated and learned preacher—now a hale and hearty man at the age of ninety-two; Mr. Camp, of Ridgebury, of a feeble body but powerful mind; Mr. Smith, of Stamford, a dignified gentleman of the old school, and married to the sister of John Cotton Smith, afterward Governor of the State; Mr. Waterman, of Bridgeport, author of a clever *Life of Calvin*.

From these hasty notes, you will see that the clergy of that day in Fairfield county were a very able set of men, and worthy of being duly and honorably chronicled in these mementoes of the past. I speak of the era of 1800, yet including a few subsequent years. A half century before, a wig with a black coat meant D. D.; and D. D. usually meant wig and black coat: but that dynasty had passed. Breeches and white-top boots—white meaning butternut color—were, however, still clerical.

These gentlemen whom I have described, traveled on horseback, and were always well mounted; some of them were amateurs in horseflesh: I have already had occasion to notice the points of Dr. Rip-

ley's beast. In manners they were polite, and somewhat assiduous in their stately courtesies. They spoke with authority, and not as the scribes. Their preaching was grave in manner, and in matter elaborately dovetailed with Scripture. The people drank hard cider, and relished sound doctrine: it was not till nearly half a century afterward that—imbibing soda-water, champagne, and other gaseous beverages—they required pyrotechnics in the pulpit. A soul to reach heaven must then have the passport of Saybrook; and in point of fact, orthodoxy was so tempered with charity, that nearly all who died, received it.

If the creed of that day was severe and bespoke the agonies of its Puritan origin, it still allowed large range for temporalities and humanities. The minister of the Gospel was a father, neighbor, friend, citizen—a man in a large and generous sense. Manliness meant godliness, and godliness manliness. He spoke truth, and acted righteousness. He was independent in his circumstances, for a parish settlement was like marriage, for better or for worse; and what God had joined, man could not lightly put asunder. The common opinion now is, that the judges of temporal tribunals should be placed beyond the seductions of dependence; the people of those days thought that in matters relating to eternity, this rule was at least equally important. The clergymen were in some sort magistrates—not tech-

nically, but being generally the best educated persons—especially in country towns—they exercised a large influence, as well by the force of authority, traditionally allowed to their positions, as by their superior intelligence. They were sometimes consulted by their parishioners in matters of law\* as well as gospel, often made out deeds, settled disputes between neighbors and neighborhoods, gave advice in difficult and doubtful questions of business, and imparted intelligence upon matters of history, geography, and politics.

I need not tell you that they were counsellors in religious matters—in the dark and anxious periods of the spirit—in times of sickness, at the approach of death. They sanctified the wedding, not refusing afterward to countenance the festivity which naturally ensued. They administered baptism, but only upon adults who made a profession, or upon the children of professors. I may add that despite their divinity, they were sociable in their manners and intercourse. The state of the Church was no doubt first in their minds; but ample room was left for the good things of life. Those who came to our house examined my brother in his Greek and Latin, and I went out be-

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\* Rev. Thomas Hawley, from Northampton, was settled in the first society in Ridgefield in the year 1714, and was their first pastor, and continued till his death in 1739. He was a man of great frankness and sociability, and an excellent scholar. He was very useful to the town, not only as a minister, but in a civil capacity, serving them as their town-clerk, and doing all their writing business till his decease.—*Manuscript History of Ridgefield*, by S. G.

hind the barn to gather tansey for their morning bit-  
ters. They dearly loved a joke, and relished anecdotes, especially if they bore a little hard upon the cloth. I remember some of them at which I have heard Dr. Ripley almost crack his sides, and seen even the saintly Dr. Lewis run over at the eyes with laughing. Shall I give you a specimen? The following will suffice, though I can not recollect who it was that told it.

Once upon a time there was a clergyman—the Rev. Dr. T . . . . of H . . . .—a man of high character, and distinguished for his dignity of manner. But it was remarked that frequently as he was ascending the pulpit stairs he would smile, and sometimes almost titter, as if beset by an uncontrollable desire to laugh. This excited remark, and at last scandal. Finally, it was thought necessary for some of his clerical friends, at a meeting of the association, to bring up the matter for consideration.

The case was stated—the Rev. Dr. T . . . . being present. “Well, gentlemen,” said he, “the fact charged against me is true, but I beg you to permit me to offer an explanation. A few months after I was licensed to preach, I was in a country town, and on a Sabbath morning was about to enter upon the services of the church. Back of the pulpit was a window, which looked out upon a field of clover, then in full bloom, for it was summer. As I rose to commence the reading of the Scriptures, I cast a glance



into the field, and there I saw a man performing the most extraordinary evolutions—jumping, whirling, slapping in all directions, and with a ferocious agony of exertion. At first I thought he was mad; but suddenly the truth burst upon me—he had buttoned up a bumblebee in his pantaloons! I am constitutionally nervous, gentlemen, and the shock of this scene upon my risible sensibilities was so great, that I could hardly get through the services. Several times I was upon the point of bursting into a laugh. Even to this day, the remembrance of this scene—through the temptation of the devil—often comes upon me as I am ascending the pulpit. This, I admit, is a weakness, but I trust it will rather excite your sympathy and your prayers than your reproaches.”

Such were the orthodox—that is, the Congregational—clergy of Fairfield county, doubtless to some extent examples of their brethren throughout New England, at the period of which I speak. The religious platform still stood planked to the State. The law still gave preference to orthodoxy, as it had done from the beginning. The time had not yet arrived when Methodism, Episcopacy, Democracy, should combine with radicalism to overturn the system which the fathers had built. The storm was brewing, but as yet it was scarcely noticed even by those who were soon to be overwhelmed by it.

## LETTER XV.

*Ideas of the Pilgrim Fathers—Progress of Toleration—Episcopacy—Bishop Seabury—Dr. Duché—Methodism in America—In Connecticut—Anecdotes—Lorenzo Dow—The Wolf in my Father's Fold.*

MY DEAR C\*\*\*\*\*

I have intimated that, at the period of which I am writing, there was a storm gathering which was speedily to sweep away the last vestige of that system of legal and statutory privilege which the Congregational clergy had enjoyed in Connecticut, from the foundation of the colony. The government at the beginning was a kind of theocracy, in which God was considered as the active and positive ruler, of whom the men appointed to office were the agents. This impression pervaded the minds of the first settlers of New England. These were all Independents in religion, who had been persecuted at home, and had come here to enjoy their peculiar worship without molestation. This was in fact the fundamental idea of the Puritan Fathers.

It was therefore not only with amazement, but indignation, that they found, as the population increased, that Quakers, Baptists, and other sectarians, came among them, and demanded toleration of their peculiar notions. In vain did they seek to crush out these disturbers of the public peace. Persecution

only made them thrive: the trampling heel of oppression benefited them, as hoeing among weeds renders them more rank and pestiferous—inasmuch as the roots strike deeper, and the multiplied and invigorated seed are scattered over a constantly widening surface.

To the oppressed Puritans in England, toleration of their peculiar faith was an obvious idea. Their circumstances suggested it as a right, and denial of it as a sin. They emigrated to the New World, carrying this conviction with them. But universal liberty of worship was not yet conceived: that was reserved for those Baptists, Quakers, and others, who, from their position, had begun to see the light, though it was even to them but dimly revealed. They sought rather, each sect for itself, the tolerance of their worship, than general toleration as the right of man. Roger Williams, indeed, seems to have made this discovery, yet at first he advocated it rather in the spirit of intolerance.

As time advanced, the malcontents increased, and although orthodoxy contended at every point, it was compelled to yield inch by inch, until, at the period around which my narrative revolves, only a single remnant of its ancient privileges remained in the statute book of Connecticut. That consisted in a law which compelled every man, on reaching his majority, to pay a tax to the Congregational society in whose bounds he lived, unless he lodged a certificate

with its clerk that he belonged to some other religious persuasion.

This became the point of attack, in which all the dissenting sects in religion, and all the opposers in politics, united. But the time for this union, as stated in a preceding letter, had not yet arrived. The heterogeneous particles were silently moving to their coalescence and their crystallization, forming in the end the party which took the watchword of TOLERATION, and which gained the ascendancy in 1817; but as yet, the keenest sagacity had not seen the coming event—which was nevertheless near at hand.

Up to this time—the early part of this century—orthodoxy seemed, on the surface, to stand almost unquestioned in Connecticut.\* Unitarianism had begun in Boston, but had not made any noticeable con-

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\* After this work was begun and considerably advanced, I happened to discover in the Historical Library of the Athenæum at Hartford, a manuscript account of Ridgefield—historical, descriptive, ecclesiastical, economical, &c.—prepared by my father in 1800, upon a request by the State authorities. Among other remarks of a general nature, I find the following :

“About the time that Paine’s *Age of Reason* presented itself to view, like Milton’s *Description of Death*—‘Black it stood as night, fierce as ten furies, terrible as hell’—the horror of its features disgusted the people to such a degree that it has not yet had an advocate in this town.”

“There have been, in years past, a number of people who called themselves Baptists, who showed much zeal in religion, and met in private houses for worship : at the present day they are much on the decline.”

“A few have joined the Methodists, whose preachers, though very zealous, have made little impression on the minds of the people of this town.” A little after this the Methodists increased in the manner I have related.

“Almost all the people attend public worship with the Congregation-

quests in the land of "steady habits." Methodism—destined soon to sweep over the State—only glimmered faintly, as a kind of heat-lightning, in the distant horizon, indicating the electricity that was in the atmosphere. Universalism, in the form of Restorationism, was doubtless planted in many minds, for the eloquent and enthusiastic Murray\* had been preaching in the country. As yet, however, there were few organized societies of that persuasion—now so numerous—in the Union.

Episcopacy had been introduced at an early date. Indeed, Connecticut had the honor of receiving the

alists or Episcopalians, and there is and has been, for a long time past, the utmost harmony and friendship prevailing between the several denominations of Christians here. They frequently worship together, and thus prove the efficacy of that Spirit whose leading characteristic is charity."

\* John Murray, the first Universalist minister in Boston, was an Englishman, born about 1741. He became a preacher, and was at first a Calvinist, then a Wesleyan, then a follower of Whitfield. Afterward he went to London, and there plunged into the vortex of dissipation. In 1770, being in a state of poverty, he came to America, where he preached, and by his eloquence soon acquired a high degree of popularity. At one time (1775) he was chaplain to a regiment in Rhode Island. After preaching with success in various places, he was settled, in 1785, in Boston, where he continued till his death in 1815. He, as well as Winchester—a Universalist of great ability, and who, with Hosea Ballou, may be considered as the founder of modern Universalism in this country—was a Trinitarian; but his main doctrine was, that, "although sinners would rise to the resurrection of damnation, and at the judgment-day would call on the rocks to hide them from the wrath of the Lamb, yet that after the judgment, the punishment was fulfilled, and the damnation ended." He believed that the *devil and his angels* only would be placed at the left hand of Christ, like the goats, and that *all mankind* would be placed at his right. Ballou, Balfour, and other Universalists of the modern sect, maintain that there will be no judgment-day and no future punishment.

first ordained bishop of the Episcopal Church in America, thus anticipating even Virginia, to whom the Church of England was a mother church from the beginning. This was Bishop Seabury,\* who was consecrated in the year 1784, and established at New London.

I have heard of him a well-authenticated anecdote, which is very suggestive. On his arrival from England, whither he had been to acquire his high ecclesiastical honors, there was a general curiosity to see him and hear him preach, especially in Connecticut—although the mass of the people, being Congregation-

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\* Samuel Seabury, D. D., was a native of Groton, Conn., and was born in 1728. He graduated at Yale College, and then went to Scotland, to study medicine. He was there, however, ordained, and coming back to America, was settled at New Brunswick, New Jersey, as the missionary of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel. Having been stationed for a time at Jamaica, in the West Indies, he returned, and was settled at West Chester. Here he wrote and published several pamphlets in favor of the Crown, and was consequently seized by a party of soldiers, and for a time imprisoned at New Haven. When New York fell into the hands of the British, he joined them there, and became chaplain to Fanning's tory regiment. After the peace, having been elected bishop by the Episcopal clergy of Connecticut, he went to England, and applied to the Archbishop of York for consecration. This could not be granted, as an indispensable condition to consecration was, by law, an oath of allegiance to the crown. After nearly a year of fruitless efforts to obtain his object in England, he made application to the bishops of Scotland, by whom he was consecrated in 1784. He then returned, and entered upon the duties of his office, making New London his residence. He was an able man, and exercised a beneficial influence in establishing and extending the Episcopal Church, not only in Connecticut, but in the country generally. He was a worthy predecessor of other bishops of Connecticut—Jarvis and Brownell—who have not only done honor to the Church over which they presided, but have contributed to swell the list of scholars and divines which adorn our literature and our ecclesiastical history.

alists, and knowing that he had been an active and conspicuous tory in the Revolution, were strongly prejudiced against him. In their imaginations, a bishop who preferred monarchy to a republic, and who was called "my lord bishop," rode in a coach,\* and appeared in swelling robes, was something exceedingly formidable, if not dangerous, to Church and State.

When therefore he came to New Haven to preach, about this time—that is, soon after he had returned with his prelatie honors—the church was crowded to excess. Many who tried to get in were necessarily excluded. When the service was over, a man of the middle class met one of his friends at the door, who was unable to obtain admittance :

"Well, did you see him?" said the latter.

"Oh yes," was the reply.

"And did he preach?"

"Oh yes."

"And was he as proud as Lucifer?"

"Not a bit of it: why he preached in his shirt-sleeves!"

There was a considerable body of Episcopalians in the State, though chiefly confined to the larger towns. The professors of this religion throughout

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\* It is said that on one occasion he arrived at Yale College during the Commencement exercises, in his carriage, and a messenger was sent in to inquire if there was a seat for Bishop Seabury. Dr. Dwight, the President, sent back word that there were some two hundred bishops present, and he should be very happy to give him a place among them.



the Union, but more especially in New England, had been charged with being unfriendly to the Revolution, and it is known that a considerable portion of them were avowed tories during that painful struggle. Not only was Seabury a tory, but even Dr. Duché, who had been chaplain to the first Congress, and for a time was a zealous friend of liberty, fell from grace, and upon the occupation of Philadelphia by the British, joined them, and wrote a letter to Washington, calling upon him to give up the ungodly cause in which he was engaged.

The Episcopalians had indeed one tie more than other men to the "Old Country," and that was a powerful one. England was not only their mother in things secular but in things sacred, the sovereign being the head of that institution which to them was the Ark of the Covenant. Rebellion to the king was therefore a sort of sacrilege. And besides, the mass of the rebels were Puritans, Presbyterians, Independents, who rather repelled than invited sympathy and co-operation. It was more natural therefore, for the members of the English Church in America to take part with the king and against the Revolution, than for others.

No doubt the charge of want of patriotism was exaggerated; and as to Virginia, where Episcopacy was the dominant religion, it seems to have had less foundation. But at all events, this sect was not only repugnant to the people of New England, for the rea-

son assigned, but also on account of what they conceived to be its tone and aspect of aristocracy. Its progress, therefore, was, of course, slow in that quarter, and it may be remarked that it did not take a strong hold till, as the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States, it was separated from the English Church, and became, as it now is, an American establishment, wholly independent in its government and organization, though the same in doctrine as its transatlantic original.

At the period of which I am speaking—from the year 1800 to 1810—the relative number of Episcopalians in Connecticut was in respect to the orthodox probably about one to three or four. In Ridgefield, there was a small brown edifice, which was called the “Episcopal Church,” though sometimes, by way of ridicule, the “*Episcopal Barn*.” The sarcasm may be forgiven, for in those days the Episcopalians arrogated the word *church* as their exclusive property, just as the Catholics claim it now. The Congregationalists, according to their vocabulary, only held *meetings*, and their places of worship were nothing but *meeting-houses*. It is not till within the last ten years that the word *church* has been popularly applied to all places of worship.

The Episcopal church in Ridgefield, just mentioned, was situated on the main street, nearly opposite the Up-town school. Some years before, Dr. Perry had been installed there, but he began to preach his own

opinions, and finding himself in danger of being expelled, he abdicated, and became a physician—and a very eminent one. At length it became vacant, but in order to keep the holy fire alive, about once or twice a year it was opened, and service was held there. On these occasions the people flocked to see and hear the strange ceremonies, generally from curiosity, though perhaps there were a dozen persons of this persuasion. At the time of one of these performances, Amby Benedict, the revolving shoemaker, was engaged at our house, and he went to church—though, I believe, he was warned against it by some members of our household. On Monday morning, when he returned, we asked him about it—how he liked it, and what he thought of it.

“Well,” said he, “there’s too many apologies for me: it’s all the while getting up and sitting down, and talking out loud. Why—if you’ll believe it—there were three or four persons who kept mocking the parson, and saying ‘awmen!’ till I was rael’shamed on ’em!”

For some years subsequent to this period, the Episcopal church of Ridgefield remained only as a monument of waste and decay, but at last it revived, and is now in a flourishing condition, as indicated by a handsome edifice, erected nearly on the site of the old structure. This revival is in harmony with the general increase and progress of Episcopacy throughout the United States.

Methodism, which had swept over England, came at last to America. Its success in both countries arose from several causes. The Anglo-Saxon race, from time immemorial, have shown a tendency to deep and anxious religious thoughts and exercises.\* It was this national trait which gave such an impulse to Christianity on its first introduction into Great Britain; it was this which, a few centuries later, enabled the different orders of friars, who went from town to town preaching spiritualism with a vehement and popular eloquence, to rouse the people into enthusiasm, and sow deep and wide the seeds of their doctrines. When the teaching of religion had been organized into a system and settled by authority, there were constantly rising up men deeply impressed with the importance of religious truth, and earnest in the desire to please God, and make their own "calling and election sure."

Hence arose, at one time, the Lollards, at another the Gospellers, and finally the Puritans, who overturned the government, and brought about what is called the Reformation. In due time, these became divided into various sects, and in the last century, they, as well as the established church, seemed to have declined in religious spirit and fervor. The characteristic elements of the national character, though long suppressed, at last burst forth. Whit-

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\* See Penny Cyclopedia, article *Methodism*.

field, by his fiery eloquence, first ignited the spark, and disclosed the deep and glowing emotions which were kindling in the bosom of society. It was reserved, however, for Wesley, to give them full expression, and to combine into a permanent form, under the name of METHODISM, a church which should embody and perpetuate a new and startling development of religious feeling and experience.

The great characteristic of Methodism, at the outset, aside from its spiritual fervor, was, in the first place, that it addressed itself to the lower classes, and in the next, that it was chiefly propagated by illiterate preachers. Southey, in his *Life of Wesley*, gives us some amusing anecdotes, illustrative of this latter circumstance. Among these he describes a noted itinerant declaimer, who, being unable to read, employed his mother for that purpose. "She reads the text," said the orator, "and I 'splains and 'splounds." It was, in fact, the doctrine of these people at that day, which was also held by the early Baptists, that human learning is rather a hindrance and a snare to the preacher: that spiritual gifts and grace are indeed the only requisites. I remember to have heard an anecdote, applicable to this period, which is in point.

In one of his discourses, a gifted Poundtext, somewhere in Connecticut, addressed his audience in this wise: "What I insist upon, my brethren and sisters, is this: larnin isn't religion, and eddication don't give a man the power of the Spirit. It is grace and

gifts that furnish the rael live coals from off the altar. St. Peter was a fisherman—do you think he ever went to Yale College? Yet he was the rock upon which Christ built his Church. No, no, beloved brethren and sisters. When the Lord wanted to blow down the walls of Jericho, he didn't take a brass trumpet, or a polished French horn: no such thing; he took a ram's horn—a plain, natural ram's horn—just as it grew. And so, when he wants to blow down the walls of the spiritual Jericho, my beloved brethren and sisters, he don't take one of your smooth, polite, college larnt gentlemen, but a plain, natural ram's-horn sort of a man like me."

Thus, Methodism found its first impulse in a development of the inherent religious elements of the English character, rendered more explosive by long compression. It unquestionably derived aid in its beginning, also, from what was its reproach with its enemies—the use of illiterate propagandists—for it must be remembered that Methodism did not address itself to high places, but to the million. Many of its preachers possessed great natural eloquence, and their defects of grammar and rhetoric rather pleased than offended the rude audiences to whom they spoke. In recent times, political leaders, and promoters of various public objects, have found it convenient to take a hint from this portion of history.

It must be stated, furthermore, that the new sect

derived a sort of epidemic power from nervous or mesmeric phenomena which the ignorant deemed miraculous, and therefore divine. In the midst of agonizing prayers and preachings, individuals would fall down as in a swoon. These were immediately surrounded with persons, calling in impassioned tones upon the Holy Spirit, as if there personally present, to wash out their sins, and clothe them in the white robes of the Lamb of God. The subject of these solemn and agitating exercises, waking from his catalepsy, was saluted as having passed from death to life, from perdition to salvation! Then were poured out prayers of thanksgiving, and then all joined in hymns, set to plaintive and sentimental airs, many of them associated in the popular mind with the warm and tender emotions of youthful love and human affection. And these scenes often took place at night, in the midst of the forest, amid the glare of torches, the pageantry of processions, and the murmurs of a thousand voices, joining in a general anthem of agonizing prayers and shouting praises.

To a religious mind, every thing that tends to promote religion in the hearts of men, is apt to be regarded as distinct from the ordinary providence of God, yet it is difficult to prove even in such movements, that He ever proceeds without the use of means. The notice of these is the sphere of the historian, and therefore, not denying or disregarding the invisible influences of the divine Spirit,



I merely chronicle the open and tangible events of the time I refer to, with the machinery employed to produce them. The founders of Methodism did not disdain human means: nay, I suspect it will be difficult to find in the originators of any sect or creed, a more profound knowledge of human nature, or a more sedulous employment of human agencies, than are to be discovered in the early promoters of Methodism. Their camp-meetings, their love-feasts, their adaptation of popular airs to religious songs, their spirit of social fellowship, their use of the inferior arts of oratory, their employment of the intense enthusiasm of congregated masses, their promotion of cataleptic spasms to excite a feeling of supernatural awe in the people, were all calculated to produce precisely such effects as actually proceeded from them. It is neither necessary, nor is it philosophical, in explaining what is natural, to go beyond the known laws of nature. That God was in all this, we believe, but only as He is in all the other movements of human life, tending to work out human destiny. Who can doubt that the career of Washington, the soldier and statesman, was as much ordered by Providence as that of Wesley the divine?

We all know with what epidemic celerity Methodism spread over certain portions of England, especially among the masses of Bristol, Moorfields, Blackheath, Newcastle, and other places. Wesley began his mission in 1729: at his death, in 1791, after a

laborious life of sixty-five years, there were three hundred itinerant preachers, and a thousand local preachers, with eighty thousand persons, associated in societies, all belonging to his creed. This of course spread to America, but there was less immediate field for it here. Nevertheless, it was gradually extended, especially in the newly settled parts of the southern and western country. In Kentucky and Tennessee it was widely planted, and here it was attended with some of the most extraordinary phenomena\* recorded in the history of the human mind. At

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\* These consisted of various manifestations, called the "*falling*," the "*jerking*," the "*rolling*," the "*dancing*," and the "*barking*" exercises, together with visions and trances. The latter were the most common; in these the subject was in a state of delicious mental revery, with a total suspension of muscular power and consciousness to external objects. In the jerks, the spasms were sometimes so violent as to induce the fear that those affected with them would dislocate their necks. Often the countenance was most disgustingly distorted. The first instance of this occurred at a sacrament in East Tennessee. These phenomena were most common with the Methodists, though people of other sects were attacked by them. The contagion even spread to Ohio, among the sober people of the Western Reserve.—*Howe's Great West*, p. 179.

Dow gives the following description in his journal, the period being in the early part of 1804, and the scenes of the events described, in Tennessee and Kentucky.

"I came to a house, and hired a woman to take me over the river in a canoe for my remaining money and a pair of scissors; the latter of which was the chief object with her: so one's extremities are others' opportunities. Thus with difficulty I got to my appointment in Newport, in time.

"I had heard about a singularity called the *jerks* or *jerking exercise*, which appeared first near Knoxville in August last, to the great alarm of the people; which reports at first I considered as vague and false; but at length, like the Queen of Sheba, I set out to go and see for myself, and sent over these appointments into this country accordingly.

"When I arrived in sight of the town, I saw hundreds of people collected in little bodies; and observing no place appointed for meet-

the religious gatherings, whether in dwellings and churches or in the open woods and fields, persons would be suddenly taken with certain irresistible spasms, inciting them to the most strange and extravagant performances. Some would bark like dogs, and attempt to climb the trees, declaring that they were treeing the devil. Some had delicious trances; others danced as if beset with sudden frenzy; others still were

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ing, before I spoke to any, I got on a log and gave out a hymn, which caused them to assemble round, in a solemn, attentive silence. I observed several involuntary motions in the course of the meeting, which I considered as a specimen of the jerks. I rode several miles behind a man across a stream of water, and held meeting in the evening, being ten miles on my way.

“In the night I grew uneasy, being twenty-five miles from my appointment for next Monday at eleven o’clock. I prevailed upon a young man to attempt carrying me with horses until day, which he thought was impracticable, considering the darkness of the night and the thickness of the trees. Solitary shrieks were heard in these woods, which he told me were the cries of murdered persons. At day we parted, being still seventeen miles from the spot; and the ground covered with a white frost. I had not proceeded far before I came to a stream of water from the springs of the mountain, which made it dreadful cold. In my heated state I had to wade this stream five times in the course of about an hour, which I perceived so affected my body that my strength began to fail. Fears began to arise that I must disappoint the people, till I observed some fresh tracks of horses, which caused me to exert every nerve to overtake them, in hopes of aid or assistance on my journey, and soon I saw them on an eminence. I shouted for them to stop till I came up. They inquired what I wanted; I replied, I had heard there was a meeting at Seversville by a stranger, and was going to it. They replied that they had heard that a crazy man was to hold forth there, and were going also; and perceiving that I was weary, they invited me to ride; and soon our company was increased to forty or fifty, who fell in with us on the road from different plantations. At length I was interrogated whether I knew any thing about the preacher. I replied, I had heard a good deal about him, and had heard him preach, but had no great opinion of him; and thus the conversation continued for some miles before they found me out, which caused some color and smiles in the company. Thus I got on to meeting, and after taking

agitated by violent and revolting convulsions and twitchings, which obtained the popular name of the *jerks*. All classes of persons who came within the atmosphere of the mania—Methodists, Presbyterians, and Quakers—men and women—became subjects of these extraordinary agitations. I recollect to have heard the late Thomas H. Gallaudet say that, when a young man, he visited one of the meetings where these phe-

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a cup of tea, gratis, I began to speak to a vast audience: and I observed about thirty to have the *jerks*, though they strove to keep as still as they could. These emotions were involuntary and irresistible, as any unprejudiced eye might discern. Lawyer Porter (who had come a considerable distance) got his heart touched under the word, and being informed how I came to meeting, voluntarily lent me a horse to ride near one hundred miles, and gave me a dollar, though he had never seen me before.

“Hence to Marysville, where I spoke to about one thousand five hundred: many appeared to feel the word, but about fifty felt the *jerks*. At night I lodged with one of the *Nicholites*, a kind of Quakers, who do not feel free to wear colored clothes. I spoke to a number of people at his house that night. Whilst at tea, I observed his daughter (who sat opposite to me at the table) to have the *jerks*, and dropped the tea-cup from her hand in violent agitation. I said to her, ‘Young woman, what is the matter?’ She replied, ‘I have got the *jerks*.’ I asked her how long she had it. She observed, ‘A few days,’ and that it had been the means of the awakening and conversion of her soul, by stirring her up to serious consideration about her careless state, &c.

“Sunday, Feb. 19, I spoke in Knoxville, to hundreds more than could get into the court-house—the governor being present. About one hundred and fifty appeared to have jerking exercise, among whom was a circuit preacher (Johnson), who had opposed them a little before, but he now had them powerfully; and I believe he would have fallen over three times, had not the auditory been so crowded, that he could not, unless he fell perpendicularly.

“After meeting, I rode eighteen miles to hold meeting at night. The people of this settlement were mostly Quakers, and they had said, as I was informed, that ‘the Methodists and Presbyterians have the *jerks* because they *sing* and *pray* so much; but we are a still, peaceable people, wherefore we do not have them;’ however, about twenty of them came to meeting, to hear one, as was said, somewhat in a Quaker line.

nomena were taking place, and that he felt within himself an almost uncontrollable temptation to imitate some of the strange antics that were going on around him.

Nor did all this—so calculated as it was to excite public curiosity, and to produce in the minds of the ignorant a superstitious idea that there must be something supernatural in a religion that led to such

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But their usual stillness and silence was interrupted, for about a dozen of them had the *jerks* as keen and as powerful as any I had seen, so as to have occasioned a kind of grunt or groan when they would jerk. It appears that many have undervalued the Great Revival, and attempted to account for it altogether on natural principles; therefore it seems to me, from the best judgment I can form, that God hath seen proper to take this method to convince people that he will work in a way to show his power, and sent the *jerks* as a sign of the times, partly in judgment for the people's unbelief, and yet as a mercy to convict people of divine realities.

“I have seen Presbyterians, Methodists, Quakers, Baptists, Church of England, and Independents, exercised with the *jerks*. Gentleman and lady, black and white, the aged and the youth, rich and poor, without exception; from which I infer, as it can not be accounted for on natural principles, and carries such marks of involuntary motion, that it is no trifling matter. I believe that they who were the most pious and given up to God are rarely touched with it; and also those naturalists, who wish and try to get it to philosophize upon it, are excepted; but the lukewarm, lazy, half-hearted, indolent professor, is subject to it, and many of them I have seen, who, when it came upon them, would be alarmed, and stirred up to redouble their diligence with God, and after they would get happy, were thankful that it ever came upon them. Again, the wicked are frequently more afraid of it than the small-pox or yellow fever. These are subject to it; but the persecutors are more subject to it than any, and they sometimes have cursed and swore and damned it, whilst jerking. There is no pain attending the jerks except they resist them, which, if they do, it will weary them more in an hour than a day's labor, which shows that it requires the consent of the will to avoid suffering.

“I passed by a meeting-house, where I observed the undergrowth had been cut up for a camp-meeting, and from fifty to one hundred saplings left breast high, which to me appeared so slovenish that I could not but

results—constitute the whole of the machinery of Methodism, at this period. Some of the preachers seemed to be impelled in their orbits—if not as swift, certainly more eccentric than those of the comets — by a zeal, an energy, an enthusiasm, which some kind of inspiration alone could create. The wandering priests of Buddhism—who traverse mountains and rivers, seas, islands, and continents, with a restlessness which knows no abatement; the Mohammedan friars that profess to work miracles, and in evidence of their powers, spin round and round till they fall fainting upon the floor; the Bramins, who rush under the wheels of Juggernaut, or cause themselves to be suspended by irons hooked into the muscles of the back, and then whirled round in the

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ask my guide the cause, who observed they were topped so high, and left for the people to jerk by. This so excited my attention that I went over the ground to view it, and found, where the people had laid hold of them and jerked so powerfully, that they had kicked up the earth as a horse stamping flies. I observed some emotion both this day and night among the people. A Presbyterian minister (with whom I stayed) observed, ‘Yesterday, whilst I was speaking, some had the jerks, and a young man from North Carolina mimicked them out of derision, and soon was seized with them himself (which was the case with many others). He grew ashamed, and on attempting to mount his horse to go off, his foot jerked about so that he could not put it into the stirrup. Some youngsters seeing this, assisted him on, but he jerked so that he could not sit alone, and one got up to hold him on, which was done with difficulty. I observing this, went to him, and asked him what he thought of it. Said he, “I believe God sent it on me for my wickedness, and making light of it in others,” and he requested me to pray for him.’

“I observed his wife had it; she said she was first attacked in bed. Dr. Nelson had frequently strove to get it (in order to philosophize about it), but he could not; and observed they could not account for it on natural principles.”



air from a long pole ;—these were all rivaled, if not outdone, by the indomitable zeal of some of the preachers and propagators of Methodism at this period.

The most conspicuous of these was the noted Lorenzo Dow.\* He was a native of Connecticut, and at the period of my boyhood had begun to be talked about chiefly on account of his eccentricities—though he was also a man of some talent. About the time

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\* Methodism was first introduced into America about the year 1766. In 1771, the celebrated Francis Asbury came over from England, and preached here. He was followed by Dr. Coke in 1784, and in that year the Methodist Church in America was duly organized. The two individuals just mentioned, were men of education, talent, zeal, and piety, and to their earnest and untiring labors, the rapid spread of the society may be chiefly attributed. Asbury, who was constituted senior bishop in the United States, in the course of his ministry ordained three thousand ministers, and preached seventeen thousand sermons !

Among the extraordinary incidents in the history of Methodism, we may note the following :

“ Last year (1799) was celebrated for the commencement of those Great Revivals in Religion in the Western Country, which induced the practice of holding camp-meetings. This work commenced under the united labors of two brothers by the name of McGee, one a Presbyterian and the other a Methodist preacher. On one occasion, William McGee felt such a power come over him, that he seemed not to know what he did ; so he left his seat and sat down on the floor, while John sat trembling under the consciousness of the power of God. In the mean time there was great solemnity and weeping all over the house. He was expected to preach, but instead of that, he arose and told the people that the overpowering nature of his feelings would not allow of his preaching, but as the Lord was evidently among them, he earnestly exhorted the people to surrender their hearts to him. Sobs and cries bespoke the deep feeling which pervaded the hearts of the people. This great and earnest work excited such attention, that the people came in crowds from the surrounding country, and this was the beginning of that great revival in religion in the western country which introduced camp-meetings. This novel mode of worshiping God excited great attention. In the night the grove was illuminated by lighted candles, lamps, or torches. This, together with the stillness of the night, the solemnity which rested on every countenance, the peculiar and earnest manner in which the preach-



that Methodism began to spread itself in Connecticut, Dow appeared in Ridgefield, and taking a stand on 'Squire Nathan Smith's wood-pile, held forth to a few boys and other people that chanced to be in that quarter. I was returning from school, and stopped to hear his discourse. He was then about thirty years of age, but looked much older. He was thin and weather-beaten, and appeared haggard and ill-

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ers exhorted the people to repentance, prayer, and faith, produced the most awful sensations on the minds of all present."

"At a meeting held in Cabin Creek, the work seemed to bear down all opposition. Few, if any, escaped from it; such as attempted to run from it were frequently struck down in the way. On the third night so many fell (that is, in cataleptic swoons), that to prevent their being trodden under feet, they were collected together, and laid out in two squares of the meeting-house. At the great meeting at Cambridge, the number that fell was named at over three thousand!"—*Bangs' History of Methodism*, vol. ii. p. 108.

The following will give some idea of the men and manners connected with Methodism at this era:

"Calvin Wooster was a man of mighty prayer and faith. Nor was he alone in this work. The other preachers caught the flame of divine love, and were carried forward, under its sacred influence, in their Master's work. Many instances of the manifestations of Divine power and grace might be narrated, one of which I will relate. At a quarterly meeting in the Bay of Quinte circuit (Upper Canada, A. D. 1799), as the preacher commenced his sermon, a thoughtless man in the front gallery commenced in a playful mood to swear profanely, and thus to disturb the congregation. The preacher paid no attention to him, until he was in the midst of his sermon, when feeling strong in faith and the power of his might, suddenly stopping, he fixed his piercing eyes on the profane man; then stamping his foot, and pointing his finger at him, with great energy he cried out, '*My God, smite him!*' He instantly fell, as if shot through the heart with a bullet. At this moment such a divine afflatus came down upon the congregation, that sinners were crying to God for mercy in every direction, while the saints of God burst forth in loud praises to His name."—*Bangs' History of Methodism*, vol. ii. p. 74.

We now come to Lorenzo Dow.

This person was born at Coventry, Connecticut, in 1777. In his "*Exemplified Experience, or Lorenzo's Journal*," he says: "One day,

favoured, partly on account of his reddish, dusty beard, some six inches long—then a singularity if not an enormity, as nobody among us but old Jagger the beggar cultivated such an appendage. I did not comprehend what he said, and only remember his general appearance. He was merely passing through Ridgefield, and soon departed, having produced the impression that he was an odd sort of person, and rather

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when I was between three and four years old, I suddenly fell into a revery about God and those places called Heaven and Hell, so that I forgot my play, and asked my companion if he ever said his prayers. He said no. 'Then,' said I, 'you are wicked, and I will not play with you;' so I quit his company, and went into the house." Afterwards, having killed a bird, he became distressed in mind, and wished he had never been born. Still later he had a dream, in which he saw the prophet Nathan, who told him that he would die at the age of twenty-two. In 1791 he saw John Wesley in a dream, which induced him to change his ways, and enter on a religious life. "Soon," he says, "I became like a speckled bird among the birds of the forest, in the eyes of my friends."

After various mental agonies he took to preaching, and up to the time of his death, which occurred at Georgetown, District of Columbia, in 1834, he traveled and preached with a restlessness perhaps without parallel in human history. He not only visited repeatedly almost every part of the United States, but England and Ireland, everywhere addressing such audiences as came in his way. Sometimes he spoke from a stump, or rock, or fallen tree in the wildernesses; sometimes in private houses, sometimes in religious edifices, sometimes on the platforms of camp-meetings. Few men have ever traveled so many miles: no one, probably, ever preached to so great a number of persons.

His Journal, above mentioned, is a very curious, though quaint and affected, record of his experience and adventures. He appears to have been actuated by a desire of moving on and on, fearing no danger, and overcoming every obstacle. He must preach or die, and he must preach in new places and to new audiences. He seems to have considered himself as urged by a divine enthusiasm to preach the Gospel. The shrewd observer will think he was quite as anxious to preach Lorenzo Dow. He evidently had a large share of personal vanity: his spirit was aggressive, and attacks upon other sects constituted a large part of his preaching. In one instance he was prosecuted for libel upon a clergyman, and being

light-headed. I afterward heard him preach twice at camp-meetings, and will endeavor to give you some idea of his manner. The following is a passage, as nearly as I can recollect, his general discourse being aimed at those who accused the Methodists of being New Lights—a mere set of enthusiasts.

“Now, my friends, you all know we are called New Lights. It is said that we have in us a false fire which throws out a glare only to mislead and deceive the people. They say we are actuated by the spirit of the devil, instead of the spirit of religion. Well, no matter what they say; no matter what they call us: the question is, whether we have the real fire or the false fire? I say we have got the true fire, and the old Church-and-State Presbyterians have got the false fire. That’s what I say, and I’ll prove it.

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convicted was imprisoned for a short time. He resorted to various artifices to excite the curiosity of the public, and thus to increase his audiences. His doctrines were those of the Methodists, and he generally associated with Methodist congregations: still, he never formally became a member of that communion. Though he had the weaknesses and vices above suggested, he is generally regarded, on the whole, as a sincere and religious man. His character is, however, not to be commended, for infidelity thrives upon foibles, eccentricities, artifices, and vulgarities, in one who assumes to be a preacher of the Gospel. Such things may catch a few thoughtless minds, but the reflecting—those who will exert a wide and lasting influence—will be apt to point to them as evidence that religion is the offspring of ignorance and fanaticism, played upon by charlatans and pretenders.

Peggy Dow, Lorenzo’s wife, seems to have had a great admiration of her husband, and to have shared in his religious zeal, without partaking of his vices of manner and mind. On the whole, her character happily displays the feminine characteristics of warm affection, devotion, and that charity which covers a multitude of sins and weaknesses.

“There is in nater, no doubt, as well as in religion, both false fire and true fire : the first is rotten-wood, which shines in the night. You often see it among the roots and trunks of old decayed trees. But you may pile it up as high as a haystack, and it won’t make a pot boil. Now ain’t that like the old sleepy, decayed Presbyterians? But as to the true fire—if you take a few kindlings, and put ’em under a kittle, and put some water in the kittle, and then set the kindlings on fire, you’ll see something, won’t you? Well : what will you see? Why the water begins to wallop and wallop and wallop ! Well, suppose you had never seen water bile before—you’d say the devil was in it, wouldn’t you? Of course you would. Now, it is just so with this carnal generation—the old school, the rotten-wood, the false-fire people—they see us moved with the true fire of religion, and they say the devil’s in it—because they never saw it before, and don’t understand it. Thus it is they call us New Lights. No wonder, for they have nothing but false fire in their hearts !”

Lorenzo was not only uncouth in his person and appearance, but his voice was harsh, his action hard and rectangular. It is scarcely possible to conceive of a person more entirely destitute of all natural eloquence. But he understood common life, and especially vulgar life — its tastes, prejudices, and weaknesses ; and he possessed a cunning knack of adapting his discourses to such audiences. He told

stories with considerable art, and his memory being stored with them, he could always point a moral or clinch a proposition by an anecdote. He knew that with simple people an illustration is better than logic, and when he ran short of Scripture, or argument failed, he usually resorted to some pertinent story or adapted allegory. He affected oddity in all things—in his mode of preaching as well as in dress. He took pains to appear suddenly and by surprise among the people where he proposed to hold forth: he frequently made his appointments a year beforehand, and at the very minute set, he would come like an apparition. He often took scraps of texts, and extracted from them, by a play upon words, an unexpected argument or startling inference. His endeavor seemed to be to exercise an influence over the imagination by associating himself in the minds of the people with John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness, and living on locusts and wild honey. His special admirers saw great merit in his oddities, and even in his long shaggy *goat*. By the vain world of that day, this was deemed beastly—for then foppery had not taken the beard as its type and its glory. It was thirty years later, that I saw an American among the fashionable circles of Paris, and who had his reddish hair and beard dressed like Christ in Raphael's pictures—very much petted by the French ladies, who thought him so like our Saviour!

At the time of which I am writing, one of the great points of dispute between Methodism and Orthodoxy was that of "Falling from Grace:" the former taking the affirmative and the latter the negative. The infirmities of human nature, sometimes visible in the Elect, furnished abundant and laughter-moving weapons against the doctrine of the saints' perseverance. The apostle Peter, who had denied his Lord and Master under circumstances which made his conduct appear in the highest degree craven and cowardly, furnished a standing argument for the preachers of Methodism. The scandals of deacons and priests in the orthodox church, were picked up and thrown into the argument with more wit than delicacy. In this coarse, Parthian warfare, Lorenzo was an adept—and he seemed to take as much delight in provoking the ribald mirth of the mocker of all religion, as in controverting ecclesiastical error in the mind of the sincere inquirer. It is true that, in private, the orthodox sometimes paid back and perhaps with interest, for the Methodists claimed to attain spiritual perfection. It was not difficult to find cases in which their practice jarred a little with their pretenses. The Methodists had the advantage, however, for their preachers introduced these topics in their discourses, often making pointed and personal attacks the pepper and salt of their harangues—while the more stately orthodox usually confined their discussions to private circles, or perhaps general and dignified notices in



their sermons. On one occasion, Dow illustrated his views on the subject of "Falling from Grace," somewhat as follows, his text being a part of the verse, Heb. ii. 1: "*Lest at any time we should let them slip.*"

"Now, my brethren," said Dow—when he had stated and enlarged upon his argument—"let me take a case, and a very likely one to happen. Nay, I'm not at all sure that it hain't happened, and not a hundred miles off. Well, here is Major Smith, who becomes convarted. He joins the church, and is safe as a codfish, pickled, packed, and in port. Of course his calling and election are sure. He can't let 'em slip. He can't fall from grace—not he! Don't be too certain of that, my brethren! Don't be too sure of that, major!

"I say nothing agin the character of Major Smith, mind you. He is a very fair sort of a man, as the world goes. Nevertheless, they du say that he was in the habit of taking, now and then, a glass or two more than was good for him. He was fond of a warm gin toddy, especially of a cold day, for he was subject to wind on the stomach; and then, in order to settle his toddy, he would take a glass of flip, and then to settle his flip, he'd take a glass of toddy, agin. These he usually took in the arternoon and at Northrup's tavern.

"But, as I say, one day Major Smith was convarted, and taken into the church, and so he must reform.



He must give up toddy and flip, and Northrup's tavern. And he has gin them all up—for he is perfectly sincere—mind you. Well, some weeks later, on the afternoon of a cold blustering day in December, he happens to be passing by Northrup's tavern. Just at that time, as the devil will have it—for the devil is always looking out for a chance—his old friend and bottle companion, Nate Seymour, comes to the door, and sees the major. Well, the latter rides up, and they shake hands, and talk over the news, and finally Nate says, 'Won't you come in a minute, major?'

"Now, as I tell you, it's a cold winter's day, and the major says he'll jest get down, and warm his fingers. He won't drink any thing of course, but he thinks it best not to break all at once with his old friends, for they may say he's proud. Perhaps he'll have a chance to say a word in season to some one. So he goes in, and, as it happens, Nate jest then puts the red-hot poker into a mug of flip. How it bubbles and simmers and foams! What a nice odor it does send forth into the room! And jest then the landlord grates in a little nutmeg. What a pleasant sound is that to poor, shivering human nater, on a cold day in December!

"Well, Nate takes it and hands it to the major. The major says to himself, 'I'll just put it to my lips, so as not to seem frumptious and unreasonable, but I won't drink any.' So he takes it, and it feels mighty warm and nice to his cold fingers. He looks at it;

its fumes rise to his nostrils; he remembers the joys of other days; he puts it to his lips!

“Well, and what then? Oh nothing, my brethren—only I tell you, that elect or no elect, that is a very slippery spot for the major!”

The effect of this upon an audience to whom such language was adapted, especially as it all referred to a well-known person, who, after being taken into the church, had backslidden to his old habits, may be easily appreciated. Who could argue down such telling logic with the million?

For a considerable time the Methodists made few converts in Ridgefield, but they planted themselves in the neighboring towns, and soon their numbers were sufficient to hold camp-meetings in various quarters. At length, Dr. Baker, a respectable physician of our village, became imbued with the rising spirit, and he began to hold meetings in his kitchen. Here there was praying, and exhorting, and telling experiences, and singing sentimental airs to warm and sentimental religious hymns. The neighbors gathered in, and soon it was noised abroad that a great work was going on. Various passions were insensibly wrought upon to swell the movement; curiosity was gratified by something new and strange; the love of the dramatic, implanted in every bosom, was delighted with scenes in which men and women stood up and told how the Lord had brought them from death unto life: the tender melodies touched and melted many hearts;

the sympathy of young men and young maidens was titillated; the love of fellowship between man and man was flattered; and all these varying emotions seemed to be melted into one warm, flowing current of religion, sanctified by the presence of the Holy Spirit! How curious are the workings of the human heart! how much of earth is often mingled in with what claims to breathe of heaven!

I cast no reproaches upon these persons: Dr. Baker was a true and worthy man, and among his associates were several excellent people. I do not deny that in the end much good was done; that the thoughtless, the frivolous, the vain, and in some cases the wicked and the debased, were drawn, even through these means, to religious convictions and a religious life. Still, these things were looked upon as a vain and delusive mania, or perhaps even the work of the Evil One, by the world around, and especially by those of the established creed. Nevertheless, the movement spread, and at last became epidemic. Some of my father's flock strayed from the fold, and became the spoil of the enemy. One or two of his staunch church members saw new light in the horizon of their religion. A little short man, up at the North End, who had a fine treble voice and a tall wife with the throat of a trumpet, but who was withal one of the pillars of the church—came to our house, bringing the said wife on a pillion, both charged with Lorenzo Dow's true fire. Therefore, they lifted up their voices

and testified to my father that a new era had come, and that it was time for him and his people to wake up from their slumbers, which boded death and destruction to their souls!

The precise scene I do not remember. I have only a general recollection of the deep anxiety of both my parents about this time. A cloud was on their hearts and their countenances, by day and night. The deacons were called in, and there were profound consultations as to what was to be done. The neighboring clergy were consulted, and it was soon discovered that they, too, were beset by the same dangers. In some cases, their people joined the Methodists; in others, they imitated them by evening meetings for prayer and mutual exhortation. The very air at last seemed impregnated with the electric fluid. Not only men of a religious turn seemed in a state of unusual excitement, but the cold, the careless, the worldly, began to ask, What shall we do to be saved? Attempts were made in some places to preach down the rising tempest as an illusion. Parson Elliot, of Fairfield, gave it battle, as I have stated, declaring that in religion, as well as in the affairs of life, a steady, tranquil devotion was better than sudden and irregular storms of fervor.

Nevertheless, the movement could not be arrested. My father, who was, I think, a far-seeing man, did not attempt to breast the shock. He took a wiser course. He adopted evening meetings, first at the

church, and afterward at private houses. No doubt, also, he put more fervor into his Sabbath discourses. Deacons and laymen, gifted in speech, were called upon to pray and exhort, and tell experiences in the private meetings, which were now called *conferences*. A revival of religious spirit arose even among the orthodox. Their religious meetings soon became animated, and were speedily crowded with interested worshipers or eager lookers-on. At the same time, the church was newly shingled and freshly painted; the singing choir was regenerated; the lagging salary of my father was paid up, and as winter approached, his full twenty cords of wood were furnished by his people according to the contract.

And yet the wolf was all the while stealing the sheep! Nevertheless, my father's church increased, and at the same time the dreaded Methodists converted a large number of the idle, dissipated, and irreligious, who had become, like Ephraim of old, so joined to idols, that there seemed no other way than to let them alone. But for Methodism, this had undoubtedly been their fate. And thus what seemed a mania, wrought regeneration; thus orthodoxy was in a considerable degree methodized, and Methodism in due time became orthodoxed. Years passed on, and now there are two bright places of worship in Ridgefield; one Methodist and one Congregational, and both filled with worshipers. The people of the latter consist for the most part of the staid, sober, and

middle-aged class: those of the former—though the church had its rise in a kitchen—comprise many respectable citizens, with a full proportion of the gentler sex, who comprehend and employ the advantages of coquettish French bonnets, trimmed with wreaths of artificial flowers! Moreover, the clergymen of the two churches exchange with each other, and the professors of both are mutually admitted to the communion tables. Let us never judge too harshly of any movement, which, though it may develop some frailties, has evidently a religious basis. Folly, affectation, vulgarity, are always fit objects of ridicule, even when clothed in a sanctimonious garb, but in letting our arrows fly at vice, we should ever be scrupulous not to wound virtue.



## LETTER XVI.

*The Three Deacons.*

MY DEAR C\*\*\*\*\*

It may be amusing, perhaps profitable, to give here a few sketches of the remarkable characters of Ridgefield, at the opening of the present century. Some were types of their time; others, however eccentric, were exemplifications of our race and our society, influenced by peculiar circumstances, and showing into what fashions this stuff of humanity

may be wrought. They were, moreover, among the monuments that are still prominent in my recollection, and seem to me an essential part of the social landscape which encircled my youth.

I begin with the three deacons of my father's parish. First was Deacon Olmstead, full threescore years and ten at the opening of the present century. His infancy touched upon the verge of Puritanism—the days of Increase and Cotton Mather. The spirit of the Puritans lived in his heart, while the semblance of the patriarchs lingered in his form. He was fully six feet high, with broad shoulders, powerful limbs, and the august step of a giant. His hair was white, and rolled in thin curls upon his shoulders : he was still erect, though he carried a long cane, like that of father Abraham in the old pictures, representing him at the head of his kindred and his camels, going from the land of Haran to the land of Canaan. Indeed, he was my personification of the great progenitor of the Hebrews ; and when my father read from the twelfth chapter of Genesis, how he and Lot and their kindred journeyed forth, I half fancied it must be Deacon Olmstead under another name.

I know not if there be such men now—so grand, yet so simple ; so wise, yet so good ; so proud, yet so meek and lowly. It is doubtless the cant of each generation in its age and decrepitude, to degrade the present and magnify the past, perhaps because the heart is a little jaded and sickened with the disappointments



which press heavily upon it, and naturally turns with disgust at these, to bestow a kind of worship upon the shades which stalk along the distant horizon of youthful remembrances. Perhaps there is also something more personal and selfish in this process, for vanity often lingers even in the wreck of our existence. Thus an old man tottering to the grave, not unfrequently boasts of the feats he performed in his youth; and the aged dame—gray, wrinkled, and paralytic—parades the charms of her maidenhood. A vain conceit, a swelling self-appreciation, often mingle themselves unconsciously in our thoughts, and as we cannot boast of the present, which is sliding from us, we find relief and satisfaction in glorifying the past, which we still claim as our own. And again, in age, we are no doubt liable to self-deception, from looking backward over an extended view, and taking the things which rise up like monuments above all around them, as the representatives of their day and generation, while in fact they are only their exceptions and marvels.

At all events, there is an impression, I think, that the great men of the past century in New England have not their representatives in the present generation, especially in personal appearance and character; yet it is probable that our race is not really degenerated either in its physical or moral standard. There was something stately, no doubt, in the costume of the olden time: there was also a corresponding air of starchiness in the carriage. A cocked hat and

powdered wig made it necessary for a man to demean himself warily, like an Italian porter who carries a tub of water upon his head. Thus disguised, even little Dr. Marsh,\* of Wethersfield, whom I remember in his antique costume, was quite a portly gentleman. The long powdered queues, the small-clothes and knee-buckles, the white-top boots and silk stockings, with the majestic tread of a Humphries, a Daggett, or a Dana—who flourished forty or fifty years ago in the high places of Connecticut—no doubt made these leaders of society look like the born lords of creation. In comparison, the simple short-cropped, pantalooned gentlemen, who now fill the same, or similar stations—the T . . . .’s, E . . . .’s, and S . . .’s—may seem a degenerate race. Yet if you subject these to any positive test—though it must be admitted that manners have lost something of their polish and much

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\* Rev. John Marsh, D.D., of Wethersfield, was the last of the Connecticut clergy to give up the wig. I have often seen him in it, though he left it off a short time before his death. Once, when he was on a journey, he stopped overnight at a tavern. On going to bed, he took off his wig and hung it up. A servant maid happened to see it, and ran down in great terror to her mistress, saying, “Ma’am, that minister has took off his head and hung it up on a nail !”

For many years he was accustomed to mount his old chaise and set off with Mrs. Marsh to attend the annual commencement at Cambridge College. Everybody knew him along the road, and bowing, as he passed, said, “How d’ye do, Dr. Marsh ?” At last he dismissed his wig ; but now, as he went along, nobody recognized him. It was evident that his wig was necessary to insure the accustomed and grateful salute : so, on his journeys to commencement ever after, he put it on, though he discarded it at other times. He died A. D. 1820, aged 79.

Dr. Marsh was a man of great learning and politeness and high respectability. The Rev. John Marsh, now of New York, the distinguished advocate of the cause of temperance, is his son.

of their dignity—they will doubtless be found to be about as tall and as talented, and perhaps as virtuous as their predecessors. At the same time, I suspect it will be also discovered that the great mass of society is elevated in many things above the corresponding portions of the community in the early days of which I speak.

But be this as it may, there is no doubt that Deacon Olmstead was in all things a noble specimen of humanity—an honor to human nature—a shining light in the Church. I have spoken of him as having something grand about him, yet I remember how kindly he condescended to take me, a child, on his knee, and how gently his great brawny fingers encircled my infant hand. I have said he was wise; yet his book learning was small, though it might have been as great as that of Abraham, or Isaac, or Jacob. He knew indeed the Bible by heart, and that is a great teacher. He had also lived long, and profited by observation and experience. Above all, he was calm, just, sincere, and it is wonderful how these lamps light up the path of life. I have said he was proud, yet it was only toward the seductions of the world: to these he was hard and stern: to his God, he was simple, obedient, and docile as a child: toward his kindred and his neighbor, toward the poor, toward the suffering—though not so soft—he was sympathetic as a sister of charity.

Some men seem to imagine that the heart should

grow alien to man as it draws nigh to God ; that piety, burning brightly, dims, if it does not extinguish, the lamp of love and friendship and social impulses. They look upon religion as the serpent of Moses, and human affections as the snakes of the Egyptian priests, and in their view the former should destroy and devour the latter. It was not so with this noble old man. His Christianity did not take from the stature of his humanity. It was, indeed, as a Christian that his character was most distinctly marked ; yet he was no ascetic, for he enjoyed life and its comforts : he did not disdain its wealth—he toiled for it and obtained it. He lived—as a man, a father, a member of society—a large and generous life, for he had a large and generous nature. Had this been all, he would still have passed to his grave beloved and honored ; but there was much more. His religion was large, grand, imposing, like his person. He believed with such a clear, manly faith, that as he walked abroad, you felt that God and eternity were realities to him—and by irresistible influence, they became realities to you—like the sun and the earth. When you heard him pray—as I have often done—you *knew* that God was there. How sublime is such a man living such a life, even though he was but a simple country farmer !

I must now present a somewhat different portrait—that of Deacon John Benedict. He was a worthy old man, and enjoyed many claims to respect. He was not only a deacon, but a justice of the peace ; moreover,

he was the father of Aunt Delight—of whom I desire ever to speak with reverence. She, not being a beauty, was never married, and hence, having no children of her own, she combed and crammed the heads of other people's children. In this way she was eminently useful in her day and generation. The Deacon respected the law, especially as it was administered in his own person. He was severe upon those who violated the statutes of the State, but one who violated the statutes of Deacon John Benedict committed the unpardonable sin. He was the entire police of the meeting-house on Sunday, and not a boy or girl, or even a bumblebee, could offend, without condign punishment.

Nevertheless, the Deacon is said in one case—rather before my time—to have met his match. There was in the village a small, smart, nervous woman, with a vigorous clack, which, once set going, was hard to stop. One day she was at church, and having carried her dinner of mince-pie in a little cross-handled basket, she set it down under the seat. In the midst of sermon-time, a small dog came into the pew, and getting behind her petticoats, began to devour the pie. She heard what was going on, and gave him a kick. Upon this the dog backed out with a yelp, but bringing the dinner basket hung across his neck, with him. Back, back he went, tail first, across the pew into the broad aisle.

“Oh dear!” said the woman, in a shrill voice—  
“the dog's got my dinner! There! I've spoken loud

in meeting-time ! What will Deacon Benedict say ? Why ! I'm talking all the time. There it goes agin. What shall I du ?”

“Hold your tongue !” said the Deacon, who was in his official seat, fronting the explosion. These words operated like a charm, and the nervous lady was silent. The next day Deacon John appeared at the house of the offender, carrying a calf-bound volume in his hand. The woman gave one glance at the book, and one at the Deacon. That was enough : it spoke volumes, and the man of the law returned home, and never mentioned the subject afterward. This is the whole of the story as it was reported to me in my youth.

Deacon Hawley was very unlike either of his two associates whom I have described. He was younger, and of a peculiarly mild and amiable temper. His countenance wore a tranquil and smooth expression. His hair was fine and silky, and lay, as if oiled, close to his head. He had a soft voice, and an ear for music. He was a cabinet-maker by trade, a chorister by choice, a deacon by the vote of the church, a Christian by the grace of God. In each of these things he found his place, as if designed for it by nature and Providence.

How easily did life flow on for him ! How different was its peaceful current, from the battle waged by Granther Baldwin—whom I shall soon describe—from the beginning, and ceasing only when death put



his cold finger on the heart and silenced it forever. Oh nature! thou art a powerful divinity, sometimes moulding the heart in love and charity, and sometimes as if in bitterness and spite. Let those who become the judges of man here below, make due allowance for these things, as no doubt the Judge hereafter will consider them in adjusting each man's account.

In worldly affairs as well as spiritual, Deacon Hawley's path was straight and even: he was successful in business, beloved in society, honored in the church. Exceedingly frugal by habit and disposition, he still loved to give in charity, though he told not the world of it. When he was old, his family being well provided for, he spent much of his time in casting about to find opportunities of doing good. Once he learned that a widow, who had been in good circumstances, was struggling with poverty. He was afraid to offer money as charity, for fear of wounding her pride—the more sensitive, perhaps, because of her change of condition. He therefore intimated that he owed a debt of fifty dollars to her late husband, and wished to pay it to her.

"And how was that?" said the lady, somewhat startled.

"I will tell you," said the Deacon. "About five and twenty years ago, soon after you were married, I made some furniture for your husband—to the amount of two hundred dollars. I have been look-



ing over the account, and find that I rather overcharged him, in the price of some chairs ; that is, I could have afforded them at somewhat less. I have added up the interest, and here, madam, is the money."

The widow listened, and, as she suspected the truth, the tears came to her eyes. The Deacon comprehended all in an instant : he did not pause to reply, but laid the money on the table and departed.

Another trait of this good man was his patriotism. The prosperity of the country seemed always to be in his heart—a source of gratification to himself and a cause of thanksgiving to God. His conversation, his prayers, were full of these sentiments. Though of moderate intellectual gifts, his temper was so even, his desires so just, that his judgment was almost infallible ; and hence he exercised a large, though quiet and unseen influence upon other men. It is strange, in this world, to see a man who always and under all circumstances, seems to have as his master motive—the wish to do just right. Yet such a man was Deacon Hawley.

I know not how it is, but the term *deacon* is associated in many minds with a certain littleness, and especially a sort of affectation, a cant in conversation, an I-am-holier-than-thou air and manner. I remember Deacon C . . . . of H . . . ., who deemed it proper

to become scriptural, and to talk as much as possible like Isaiah. He was in partnership with his son Laertes, and they sold crockery and furniture. One day a female customer came, and the old gentleman being engaged, went to call his son, who was in the loft above. Placing himself at the foot of the stairs, he said, attuning his voice to the occasion, "La-ar-tes, descend—a lady waits!" Deacon C.... sought to signalize himself by a special respect to the ways of Providence: so he refused to get insurance against fire, declaring that if the Lord wished to burn down his house or his barn, he should submit without a murmur. He pretended to consider thunder and lightning and conflagrations as special acts of the Almighty, and it was distrusting Providence to attempt to avert their effects. Deacon Hawley had none of these follies or frailties. Though a deacon, he was still a man; though aspiring to heaven, he lived cheerily on earth; though a Christian, he was a father, a neighbor, and, according to his rank in life, a gentleman, having in all things the feelings and manners appropriate to each of these relations.

This good man is not living: he died not many years since at the age of ninety-one, enjoying to the last good health, and that tranquillity of mind and body sometimes vouchsafed to the aged after the heat and burden of active life. I look back upon his memory as a strip of sunshine bursting from the clouds, and falling upon the landscape of life, to make us feel

that there is light in the world, and that every man—even those of humble capacity and humble position—may possess it, use it, glorify and disseminate it. Such a life indeed tends to rob existence of its bitterness, and to give dignity to man and glory to God!

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## LETTER XVII.

*The Federalist and the Democrat—Colonel Bradley and General King—  
Comparison of New England with European Villages.*

MY DEAR C\*\*\*\*\*

From the ecclesiastic notabilities of Ridgefield I turn for a moment to the secular. And first, Colonel Bradley claims my notice, for he was the leading citizen of the place, in station, wealth, education, and power of intellect. He was a tall, gaunt, sallow man, a little bent at the period of my recollection, for he was then well stricken in years. He lived in a two-story white house, at the upper end of the main street, and on the western side. This was of ample dimensions, and had a grave, antique air, the effect of which was enhanced by a row of wide-arching elms, lining the street. It stood on a slight elevation, and somewhat withdrawn from the road; the fence in front was high and close; the doors and windows were always shut, even in summer. I know not why, but this

place had a sort of awfulness about it: it seemed to have a spirit and a voice, which whispered to the passer-by, "Go thy way: this is the abode of one above and beyond thee!"

In order to comprehend the impression likely to be made by such a sombre tenement, you must remember the general aspect of our country villages at that time, and indeed at the present time. Each house was built near the street, with a yard in front and a garden beside it. The fences were low, and of light, open pickets or slats, made to exclude cattle, pigs, and geese, which then had the freedom of the place. There was a cheerful, confiding, wide, open look all around. Everybody peeped from the windows into everybody's grounds. The proprietor was evidently content to be under your eye; nay, as you passed along, his beets and carrots in long beds; his roses and peonies bordering the central walk; the pears and peaches and plums swinging from the trees, all seemed to invite your observation. The barn, having its vast double doors in front, and generally thrown open, presented its interior to your view, with all its gathered treasures of hay, oats, rye, and flax. Near by, but yet apart, stood the crib for the Indian corn, showing its laughing, yellow ears between the slats, designed to give circulation to the air.

There was in all this a liberty and equality which belonged to the age. These had their foundation, partly at least, in two sources—a love of an open,

unobstructed view, and a sort of communal familiarity in the intercourse of society. The first settlers of the country found it covered with forests, which, while they sheltered the lurking Indian, the poaching wolf, and the prowling bear, also obstructed cultivation. Trees were then the great enemy, and to exterminate them was the first great battle of life. In those days men became tree-haters. The shadow of the wood was associated with dearth and danger—the open space with plenty and peace. It was not till long after, when the burning sun of our summers had taught the luxury of shade, that the people of New England discovered their mistake, and began to decorate their streets and pleasure-grounds with trees.

In these, the primeval days of our history, men gathered in the village were mutual protectors one of the other ; there was a bond of sympathy between them, founded in necessity, and this led to confidence, and confidence to familiarity. Equality of intercourse, with a general equality of feeling, were the results. And besides, wealth had not accumulated in the hands of particular individuals or in society generally. The habits therefore were simple, and the tastes of the people demanded little beyond the means and usages of mere comfort. The love of embellishment gradually crept over society, but at the period of which I speak, it had not, in Ridgefield and other villages in Connecticut, gone beyond the elements I have described.

The American who travels in foreign countries marked with the vestiges of feudal times, and the consequent division of society into castes, will be forcibly struck with the contrast which these things present to a New England village. As you pass through France, or Italy, or Germany, or Spain, you will find the houses and grounds inclosed by high stone and mortar walls, which not only hide them from the view of the passer-by, but are a positive defense against intrusion. The proprietors bar you out, as if they not only feared your entrance, but suspected you of having the evil eye, and you must not therefore look upon them or their possessions. The walls are generally high and forbidding in proportion to the rank of the proprietor: a palace is often a veritable castle, with its moat, bastions, portcullis, and warder; and all this is imitated, as far as may be, from the chateau down to the bare and desolate tenement of John Smith and Tom Jones. The doors or gates of the rich are of massive bronze or ponderous oak, and fastened with formidable locks. You can only enter by permission, and under the eye of a porter, who scrutinizes you closely. This is true not only of Paris, but of all the neighboring towns, great and small. It is the same throughout the French empire. Even in the villages, which consist of a crowded mass of tenements, like the mean suburbs of a city, every house is a prison, built of stone and mortar, and not merely denying entrance, but shutting out,

as far as possible, the chance surveillance of neighbors and travelers. This is the system throughout the continent. I have often felt almost suffocated in walking and riding in the environs of Florence and Rome, and other European cities, on finding myself confined in a narrow lane, some twelve or fifteen feet wide, with walls so high on either side as to render it impossible to look over them. This is not only true within the cities, and their immediate precincts, but often for miles around; even the fields and farms are frequently thus inclosed, indicating not only fear of intrusion or violence, but a repugnance to mere supervision.

This system of making every house a castle—not sacred by the law, as in our country, but by stone and mortar—had its origin in the violence of feudal times, when might was right. It is a system begun by the kings, imitated by the barons, and perpetuated in society by the emulous vanity of snobs and underlings. At first a necessity, it came at last to be a fashion. At present it is little more, even where it is general or universal. Its chief use now is to defend—not wealth or tangible property—but the fanciful interests of rank. A prince, a duke, a count, must not become familiar to common men. His heart must be packed in ice, so as to silence every large and philanthropic pulsation. He must associate only with his peers. He must exclude the vulgar; he must live aloof, enshrined in high walls and gates of oak and brass,



There must be in the very aspect of his dwelling a standing proclamation of his touch-me-not exaltation. In all things his life and manners must conform to the dignity of his house and his home. He has better blood than other men, and this would be contaminated by contact with common humanity. The rich bankers, Messrs. Shin and Shave, must imitate this high, titled example; they must be exclusive, at least to all beneath them. Messrs. Grog and Prog, the wealthy grocers, must follow suit according to their kind.

This brick-and-mortar exclusiveness answers another purpose: it seems to sustain the theory that the interior of the continental home is inviolable. According to this, the proprietor lays out his grounds as he pleases: he sleeps, eats, drinks, dresses, talks, walks, and amuses himself according to his fancy. He does not consult his neighbors upon any of these things. He is lord of all he surveys; not only his walls, but the current ideas of society insure him a complete domestic and social independence. So long as he does not meddle with politics or the police, he sits under his own vine and fig-tree, with none to make him afraid. He has no apprehension that some eavesdropping ear, or burglarious gaze, is waiting and watching, and will show him up to-morrow in a Two Penny Tale Teller.

This is the state of things, as it appears to the superficial observer, and hence it is that European continental life has great fascinations for some of our

American exclusives. They think it delightful to live enshrined in high walls, and to do as they please. But let us reflect and count the cost. Is this seeming social independence real, permanent, reliable? In point of fact nothing is more hollow and false. Life, liberty, property, are placed between two monsters, either of which may at any moment rise up and devour you. The government, to which you look for protection, is a despot, and full of eyes staring with suspicion. Though it may seem to smile on you, yet it has your *dossier*—that is, your life, opinions, tastes, character—even the secrets of your house and your home—written in its note-book. The police that surrounds you, and seems to protect you, may at any moment denounce and destroy you. It is by privilege, and not by right, that you live, breathe, and have a being. On the other hand, the people, whom you bar out and defy—their time may come, and as you have treated them with scorn, they are likely to repay you with vengeance.

Is not our American system of mutual confidence and mutual support, infinitely better than this? It involves sacrifices, no doubt. Impertinence, gossip, scandal, will thrive in a state of social equality and mutual dependence, but real dignity and true virtue will not seriously suffer. The false semblance, the hollow affectation of these, may be stung, but it will generally be to good and wholesome purpose. And even if there be evils, we shall learn to cure them in

time. We are a young country, and are trying various experiments. We can not expect to leap into the millennium at once. It has taken Europe—modern Europe—more than a thousand years to learn its lessons in philosophy, art, and manners. All things considered, we are as far advanced as they, and that, too, after less than a century of experience. What may we not hope in the future, and at no distant day? Let us, then, be of good cheer!

But to return. Certainly nothing can be more strongly in contrast with our frank, confiding, wide-open New England village than this suspicious, systematic, radical exclusiveness in Continental Europe. Impressed with an early love of the simplicity and equality of our country towns, I have never been able to conquer the disgust with which I have looked upon the walled houses and walled towns of Europe. They seem to me anti-social, unchristian, not merely bespeaking their barbarous origin, but perpetuating the seeds of violence and schism in the bosom of society, which will ere long be sown on the wind to produce the harvest of the whirlwind. If this system and these ideas must be endured in monarchical regions, they should not be introduced into this country. I am happy to add that they are imitated by few, and with even these, they are worn as garments that sit ill upon them, and consequently provoke ridicule rather than respect. An American exclusive is about as much an incongruity in our society

as an American duke. He is generally without real power, and those he attempts to influence are apt to go in the opposite direction from that which he points out.

I beg pardon for this wide digression, which, however, is not without a purpose. Col. Bradley was an exclusive. His cold, distant manner bespoke it. He was, I believe, an honorable man. He was a member of the church; he was steady in his worship, and never missed the sacrament. He was a man of education, and held high offices. His commission as colonel was signed by John Jay, president of the Continental Congress, and his office of Marshal of the District of Connecticut was signed by Washington. His commission as judge of the County Court was signed by the governor of the State. He was, as I have said, the most distinguished citizen of the place, and naturally enough imagined that such a position carried with it, not the shadow, but the substance of power. He seldom took an open part in the affairs of the town, but when he did, he felt that his word should be law. He deemed even a nod of his head to be imperative; people were bound to consult his very looks, and scenting his trail, should follow in his footsteps. Like most proud men of despotic temper, he sometimes condescended to bring about his ends by puppets and wire pullers. Affecting to dis-

dain all meddling, he really contrived openly or covertly to govern the church and the town. When parties in politics arose, he was of course a federalist; though ostentatiously standing aloof from the tarnish of caucuses, he still managed to fill most of the offices by his seen or unseen dictation.

Such a man could little appreciate the real spirit of democracy, now rising, like a spring-tide, over Connecticut. Believing in the "Good old way," he sincerely felt that innovation was synonymous with ruin. Thinking all virtue and all wisdom to be centered in the few, he believed all folly and mischief to be in the many. The passage of power from the former to the latter, he regarded with unaffected horror. The sanctity of the church, the stability of the law, the sacredness of home, life, and property, all seemed to him put at hazard if committed to the rabble, or what to him was equivalent, that dreaded thing—democracy.

He was certainly a man of ability, well read in history, and of superior mental gifts. He saw the coming storm, which soon lowered and thundered in the sky; but he neither comprehended its force, nor the best manner of combating it. He had not those sensitive feelers—the gift of such born democrats as Jefferson and Van Buren—which wind their invisible and subtle threads among the masses, and bring home to the shrewd sensorium an account of every trembling emotion in the breast of the million. In fact,

so far as the mass, the people were concerned, he was a profound owl, seeing deeply into the nothingness of night, but stark blind in the open day of real and pressing action. In wielding power, put into his hands by authority, he was a strong man: in acquiring it at the hands of democracy, he was a child.

I can not better illustrate his character—and the humor of his day and generation—than by depicting one of our town meetings of this era. This was of course held in my father's church, according to custom. At an early hour Col. Bradley was there, for he was punctual in all things. He sat apart in a pew with about half a dozen other men, the magnates of the town. In other pews near by, sat still others, all stanch respectabilities. These were the leading federalists—persons of high character, wealth, and influence. They spoke a few words to each other, and then relapsed into a sort of dignified silence. They did not mingle with the mass: they might be suspected of electioneering—of seeking to exercise an influence over the minds of the people. That was too degrading for them: it might do for General King, and the other democrats who could condescend to such things. These circulated freely in the aisles, giving the warm right-hand of fellowship to all they met, especially the rabble. Nevertheless, the federalists had privately determined a few days before on whom they would cast their votes, and being a majority, they carried the day.

Thus it went on for a time. But gradually, and year by year, the leaven of democracy affected more and more the general mass. Federalism held itself haughtily aloof from the lower classes, while democracy tendered to them the gratifying signals of fraternity. Federalism really and sincerely distrusted the capacity of the people to govern themselves, except through the guidance and authority of the superior classes; democracy believed, or pretended to believe, in the people, and its works were according to its real or seeming faith. There were questions at issue between the parties, which involved these opposite and diverging principles. Shall government be a republic, having an oligarchical bias, and committing power to the hands of the few; or shall it be a democracy, living and breathing and having its being from the constant inspirations of the whole people? Shall suffrage be limited or universal? Shall there be perfect religious toleration? Shall there be no preference in regard to sects? These were the actual, pending questions in Connecticut. With such issues, the parties were not only highly excited, but there was a depth of sincerity which gave a certain dignity even to party strife.

However old-fashioned it may seem, I still look back upon those stiff federalists, sitting in their pews like so many judges in Israel—rigid in their principles, hard, but honest in their opinions—with a certain degree of respect. Perhaps, too, they



were not altogether wrong, though the battle has gone against them. If, at the outset of our government, which was launched at the very period when the French Revolution was agitating the world with its turbulent waves, the suffrage had been universal, probably we should have gone to destruction. Federalism, no doubt, locked the wheels of the car of state, and thus stayed and regulated its progress, till the steep was passed, and we were upon the safe and level plain. Theoretically wrong, according to present ideas, federalism was useful and necessary in its day. It is to be regretted that its spirit of patriotism is not imitated by all modern partisans.

Col. Bradley, whom I have described as the head of the federal party in Ridgefield, was pretty nearly a type of his kind in those days. There was perhaps a shade of Jesuitism about him, a love of unseen influences, the exercise of invisible power, which was personal and not a necessary part of his principles. I perfectly recollect his appearance at church, and the impression he made upon me. He was bald, and wore a black silk cap, drawn down close over his eyes. These were like jet, not twinkling, but steady and intense, appearing very awful from the dark caverns in which they were set. I hardly dared to look at him, and if perchance his slow but searching gaze fell upon me, I started as if something had wounded me. At long intervals he came to our house, and though he was of course a supporter of my father,

being a member of the church, I had the impression that everybody breathed thick and anxiously while he was there, and felt relieved when he went away. It is now many years since he passed to his tomb, yet his appearance and general character are still fresh in my memory. He was not loved, but on the whole, his life was beneficial to the community in which he lived. He had high gifts and large opportunities: if he did not do all the good he might, it was certainly rather through the influence of original, constitutional defects, than willing and chosen obliquity of conduct.

It is not possible to conceive of two persons more unlike than the one I have just sketched and General King. The former was tall, thin, dark; the latter was of middle height, stout, erect, and florid. The first was highly educated, meditative, secret, deep, cold, circumspect; the latter was unschooled, yet intelligent; frank, though perhaps superficial; imperious, yet fearless and confiding. Col. Bradley was a federalist; Gen. King a democrat. These two, indeed, were the leaders of the two great political parties in Ridgefield.

If we could dive into the heart of man, and discern the reasons why one takes this course and another that; why one is of this sect in religion, or that party in politics, I imagine we should make some curious discoveries. In certain cases the springs of these actions are open: one is obviously deter-

mined in his choice by education ; another manifestly derives a proclivity from family influences ; another is governed by his social position ; but in other cases, we are left to guess at motives, and these often seem so personal and selfish as to reflect little honor upon human nature. As to professed politicians, I think mankind generally, without being suspected of cynicism, regard them as choosing their party on the same principles that they would choose a horse—in both cases selecting that which they can best mount and ride. They look upon the good public as so many donkeys, made to be used for hobbies and then contemptuously dismissed. We see men act thus openly and shamelessly every day of our lives, and strange to say, it is not punished, however scandalous it may appear. Nay, so far as we can judge, the people rather like it.

In still other instances the causes which determine the political conduct of men are more latent, though not the less selfish and personal. We are very apt to see according to our point of view. The fable of the pigeon's neck, which reflects red on one side and purple on the other, and hence leads two persons in opposite positions into a dispute as to the actual color of the bird, is instructive. One man, in an elevated condition in life, and having large possessions, naturally inclines to magnify the importance of authority, and the respect due to property. Thus, he becomes a federalist or a conservative. Another, destitute of

all but his head and hands, presses the claims of labor, and exalts the rights of man. He becomes a democrat. In these instances, persons actually controlled by a regard to their several positions, through the seductions and delusions of the human heart, generally consider themselves as actuated by an exclusive regard to patriotism and principle. I am afraid that we can find few instances—at least in the arena of politics—in which the heart of man rises above this fountain-head of selfishness.

The cases in which the manufacturer sustains protection and the ship-owner free-trade, the southern man the interests of slave labor, and the northern man the interests of free labor, are similar examples of selfishness, though somewhat more gross. It might seem, then, that the ballot-box—the great depository of the public will, and the source of public action and power in a republican government—must be a mass of corruption; that if the majority of votes are leavened with selfishness, the aggregated millions cast at the polls must be an offense in the sight of God. Yet in truth it is not so. The whole result is really a very intelligent index to the actual wants of the country. Suppose every man has voted selfishly, the accumulated suffrage shows where the weight of opinion lies as to the entire interests of the people. And even when we consider the juggles of politicians who make loud professions, only to obtain office, we know that for the most part,

when they have attained it, the government goes on nearly the same, whoever may administer it. Thus, on the whole, the ballot-box develops and represents a balance of good sense in the nation that outweighs even the multitudinous vices, follies, and foibles of individuals.

If I were to be asked what made Gen. King a democrat, I should be at a loss to answer. He was fond of authority: his whole presence and manner bespoke it. His carriage was erect, his head set back, his chest protruded. His hair was stiff and bristling, and being long on the top, was combed back in the manner of Gen. Jackson's. Like him he had a decidedly military air and character. He was, no doubt, a very good man on the whole, but I imagine he was not imbued with any special sympathy for the masses, or the rights of man. I have pretty good reason to believe that his natural disposition was dictatorial—despotic. It is related that one day he came into the field where his men were haying. A thunder-storm was approaching, and he commanded the laborers in a tone of authority to do this and that, thus requiring in fact what was impossible. Jaklin, an old negro, noted for his dry wit, being present, said in an undertone—

“I'm thankful the Lord reigns.”

“Why so?” said a bystander.

“Because,” was the reply, “if the Lord didn't reign, the Ginerall would!”

Why, then, was he a democrat? Was it because Col. Bradley and himself were rivals in trade, rivals in wealth, rivals in position? Was it that by a natural proclivity, derived from this relation, he became an opponent of one who stood in his way, and thus became a democrat? Who will venture to solve such questions as these?

I pray you not to consider me as saying any thing invidious of Gen. King. He was really a man to be respected, perhaps loved, even though he was not of great intellect, or morally cast in the mould of perfection. He had plain practical sense, perfect sincerity, high moral courage, an open, cheerful, frank manner. Be it understood that I speak from my childish recollections. Such is the impression he made upon me. Erect, martial, authoritative as he was, I still liked him, for to me he was kind, always asked about our family, and was particularly unlike that cold, silent, dark-browed Col. Bradley. His whole person bespoke manliness. No one looking on him would suspect him of meanness, in thought, word, or deed. He was eminently successful in business, and his wealth, at length, outstripped that of his great rival. His party also triumphed, and he became the first man of the place in position and influence.

If thus fortunate in these respects, he was even more so in his family. He had ten children—four sons and six daughters: all reached maturity, and

constituted one of the comeliest groups I have ever known. The girls all married, save one: three of the sons—among the handsome men of their time—professed bachelorism; a proof of what all shrewd observers know, that handsome men, spontaneously enjoying the smiles of the sex, feel no need of resigning their liberty, while ugly men are forced to capitulate on bended knees, and accept the severe conditions of matrimony, as the only happy issue out of their solitude. One only, Rufus H. King, of Albany, whom I have already mentioned, took upon himself the honors of wedlock. All these persons possessed that happy balance of good sense, good feelings, good looks, and good manners, which insures success and respectability in life. Is not such a family history worthy of being recorded in this book of the chronicles of Ridgefield?



## LETTER XVIII.

*The Ingersolls—Rev. Jonathan Ingersoll—Lieutenant-governor Ingersoll—  
New Haven Belles—A chivalrous Virginian among the Connecticut D.D.'s  
—Grace Ingersoll—A New Haven Girl at Napoleon's Court—Real Ro-  
mance—A Puritan in a Convent.*

MY DEAR C\*\*\*\*\*

General King's house stood on the northern slope of a small swell of ground, midway between the two extremities of the main street, and on the western side. It was a rather large two-story edifice, always neatly kept, and glowing in fresh white paint. Wealth and respectability in the full tide of successful experiment, were as readable in its appearance as if it had been so written in front, like the designation of a railway station.

Contiguous to this fresh and flourishing mansion, on the southern side, was a brown, gable-roofed house, with two venerable, but still green and flourishing button-wood trees in front. The building was marked with age, the surface of its clapboards, unprotected by paint, being softened and spongy through the influence of the seasons. The roof was of a yellowish-green tint, imparted by a gathering film of moss. The windows were contracted, and the casing, thin and plain, bespoke the architecture of our day of small things. All around was rather bare, and the little

recess in front, open and uninclosed, was at once shaven close and desecrated by a flock of geese that every night made it their camp-ground. Nevertheless, there was a certain dignity about the button-wood trees in front, and the old brown house in the rear, that excited respect and curiosity in the beholder. There was indeed some reason, for this was the home of the Ingersolls.

The Rev. Jonathan Ingersoll was my father's immediate predecessor, as minister of the First Congregational Church in Ridgefield. Though he has been dead three fourths of a century, tradition still cherishes his memory as an able preacher, a devoted pastor, and a most amiable man. In my boyhood he had long since passed away, but his widow still lingered in the old brown house I have described. She was every way a superior woman—wise, good, loving, and beloved. Her husband's mantle descended upon her shoulders, and she wore it worthily before the world and the Church. By the latter she was cherished as a guardian saint. She was always my father's friend, and in the critical and difficult passages which are sure to arise between a pastor and his people, she was the ready and efficient peacemaker. I remember her, though faintly and as a dream, yet one in which I saw a pale, gray, saintly old lady, almost too good for this wicked world.

Mr. Ingersoll had a large family, all of whom were of mature age at the period of my childhood. The youngest daughter was wife of Gen. King, and mother of the family I have described. Two of the three sons—Joseph and Moss—were deaf and dumb, and occupied the family mansion: the other son was the late Jonathan Ingersoll, of New Haven, distinguished by his eminent talents and many virtues.

Joseph Ingersoll—according to my recollection—was a plain, solid, dull-looking man, who passed to and fro with rigid directness, never smiling, and seeming to take little interest in what was passing around him. Though naturally quick-minded, and able to express a few ideas by signs, he still seemed to shun intercourse with the world, and even with his friends and neighbors. He and his brother Moss carried on the farm. He rose every day at the same hour; took his meals and retired to bed with the precision of a chronometer. You might safely have set your clock by him. At a particular time in the morning he went to the fields, where he labored with the steadiness of a mill: at a particular time in the afternoon or evening he returned. He revolved through the seasons, performing the labors due to each with the same exactitude. Had he been a machine, wound up and set each day, he could hardly have been more the creature of routine.

Moss Ingersoll was singularly unlike his brother Joseph. While the latter remained a bachelor, the

former was married, and had a family of several children. He was of a sharp, ready mind, social in his disposition, cheerful, witty, and of pleasing personal appearance and address. His whole face beamed with intelligence; his manners bespoke a certain natural refinement, and a quick sensibility to the pleasures of social intercourse. It must be remembered that this was long prior to the modern art of teaching the deaf and dumb; nevertheless, his father had taken great pains with him, and had given him some instruction through the use of signs. By means of these, Moss conversed to a limited extent with his wife and children, and indeed the whole neighborhood. He came frequently to our house, and was a great favorite. I learned to talk with him a little, and when I met him, he always had something interesting to say. His signs were descriptive, and displayed a turn for humorous associations. Deacon Olmstead was the Big Cane; my father the Bald Pate; Gen. King the Long Sword; Lieut. Smith the See-Saw, and so on. He could write so as to keep accounts, but could not read, and it is probable his range of abstract ideas was narrow. His ready perceptions, however, gave him a large acquaintance with common things. He even seemed to comprehend the outlines of Christianity, and to feel the obligations of conforming to its requisitions. How far he reached into the profounder depths of religion—the mysteries of God and eternity, of man and his vast capacities and ama-

zing destinies, as unfolded by revelation—it is impossible to know. It is related that a deaf and dumb man in France grew up to manhood, and seemed to have a highly religious tendency and experience. He attended the services of the church with steadfast assiduity, and wore a devout and penitential air. No one doubted his comprehension of the groundwork of religion, or the reality of his piety. Afterward, by a surgical operation, he recovered his hearing. It then appeared that he had never conceived the idea of God, a future state, or moral responsibility! His religion was wholly a pantomime. He saw that religious forms and ceremonies were esteemed, and hence he found pleasure in them. He was not a hypocrite, nor an automaton, but a simple exemplification of that mimetic aptitude which is a part of our nature. How large a part of the religion of the world is no better than this, it is not for us to say.

It is probable that Moss Ingersoll had passed beyond this state of living death: no doubt he comprehended—faintly, at least—the idea of a God and human accountability; it is even supposed that he conceived the triune existence of the Deity. He certainly understood something of astronomy, and the nature of the heavenly bodies. Knowing so much, how must he have yearned to know more! How must his active, earnest mind have struggled within its prison, and sought to solve a thousand mysteries which haunted and perplexed it! What

a world of thought and knowledge would have been opened to him by the gift of speech, and yet—what unfathomed and unfathomable mysteries would have remained unsolved, still to haunt and perplex him! Within the narrow circle of his observation and experience, he was almost as near the great mysteries hid in the bosom of the Almighty, which come so often and so anxiously to ask a solution, as the profoundest philosopher. I remember once, while traveling with Mr. Webster, to have asked him if he had been able, in any degree, to penetrate the curtain which hangs over the origin of man, of nature, and of God. He replied that the plainest mind could see just as far in that direction as the most acute: the Almighty had shut the door upon these his secrets, and it was vain for us to attempt to open it.

How hard is it to submit to this stern decree! Behind that awful barrier lie those mighty truths which from the beginning have stimulated, yet baffled, human thought and inquiry. No mind can see them, or yet forego them. There is God: there is man's history, man's destiny, written in letters of light! Oh that we could behold and read the amazing revelation! It may not be: the door is closed; we can not force it! The tyrant Death holds the key: he alone has power to open it; and he at last will open it to us all. Till then, patience, hope, submission—these are our only resources.

When I left Ridgefield, the two deaf and dumb



Ingersolls were still living. On my return there, some years after, both were in their graves. If their privileges were less than those of other men, so doubtless was their accountability. Perhaps even the balance of enjoyment in their lives was not much less than it would have been had they possessed their full faculties. With increased gifts come increased temptations. Men of superior endowments too often abuse their privileges, and their lives sink even below the level of ordinary men. Those who are born rich often squander their wealth, and thus the bankrupt is even more wretched than he who was a pauper from the beginning. At all events, I look back upon the somewhat mournful story of these two men with a cheerful conviction that on earth their lives passed tranquilly away, and that hereafter the cloud that shaded their minds will be removed in such manner and measure as to compensate for the privations they suffered here.

Jonathan Ingersoll, their brother, was an eminent lawyer, and settled at New Haven. Personally, he was erect, slender, and very much like his distinguished son, the present Ralph I. Ingersoll. He was marked by a nervous twitch of the face, which usually signaled itself when he began to address the jury. On these occasions his eyes opened and shut spasmodically; at the same time he drew the corners of his mouth up and down, the whole seeming as if it was his object to set the court in a roar. Sometimes he succeeded, in



spite of all his efforts to the contrary. Indeed, it was impossible for a person on seeing this for the first time, to avoid a smile—perhaps a broad one. It might seem that such a frailty would have been a stumbling-block in his profession; yet it was not so. I suspect, indeed, that his practice as a lawyer was benefited by it—for the world likes an easy handle to a great name, and this is readily supplied by a personal peculiarity. At all events, such was the dignity of his character, the grace of his language, and the perfection of his logic, his law, and his learning, that he stood among the foremost of his profession. He became Lieutenant-governor of the State, a judge of the Supreme Court, and held various other responsible offices.

This gentleman had a large family—sons and daughters: the names of the former are honorably recorded in the official annals of their native State—nay, of the United States. The daughters were distinguished for personal attractions and refined accomplishments. One of them claims a special notice—Grace Ingersoll: how beautiful the name, how suggestive of what she was in mind, in person, in character! I saw her once—but once, and I was then a child—yet her image is as distinct as if I had seen her yesterday.

In my boyhood these New Haven Ingersolls came to Ridgefield occasionally, especially in summer, to visit their relations there. They all seemed to me

like superior beings, especially Mrs. Ingersoll, who was fair and forty about those days. On a certain occasion, Grace, who was a school companion of my elder sister's, came to our house. I imagine she did not see or notice me. Certainly she did not discover in the shy boy in the corner her future biographer. She was tall and slender, yet fully rounded, with rich, dark hair, and large Spanish eyes—now seeming blue and now black, and changing with the objects on which she looked, or the play of emotions within her breast. In complexion she was a brunette, yet with a melting glow in her cheek, as if she had stolen from the sun the generous hues which are reserved for the finest of fruit and flowers. Her beauty was in fact so striking—at once so superb and so conciliating—that I was both awed and fascinated by her. Wherever she went I followed, though keeping at a distance, and never losing sight of her. She spent the afternoon at our house, and then departed, and I saw her no more.

It was not long after this that a Frenchman by the name of Grellet, who had come to America on some important commercial affairs, chanced to be at New York, and there saw Grace Ingersoll. Such beauty as that of the New Haven belle is rare in any country: it is never indigenous in France. Even if such could be born there, the imperious force of conventional manners would have stamped itself upon her, and made her a fashionable lady, at the expense

of that Eve-like beauty and simplicity which characterized her. It is not astonishing, then, that the stranger—accustomed as he was to all the beauty of French fashionable life—should still have been smitten with this new and startling type of female loveliness.

I may remark, in passing, and as pertinent to my narrative, that the women of New Haven in these bygone days were famous for their beauty. They may be so yet, but I have not been there—except as a railroad passenger—for years, and can not establish the point by my own direct testimony. As to the olden time, however, I can verify my statements from the evidence of my own eyes, as well as the records of long tradition. Among the legends I have heard on this subject is one to this effect. There was once a certain Major L....—a Virginian—who I believe was at one time a member of Congress. He was a federalist; and when I saw him at Washington, about the year 1820, he wore a thick queue, and a good sprinkling of hair-powder—then generally esteemed very undemocratic. He was a large and handsome man, and at the period of which I speak was some fifty years of age. But being a Virginian, and withal a bachelor, he was still highly chivalrous in his feelings and conduct toward the fair sex.

Now, once upon a time this handsome old bachelor paid a visit to New England. Having stayed a while

at Boston, he journeyed homeward till he came to New Haven. It chanced to be Commencement-day—the great jubilee of the city—while he was there. Having no acquaintances, he set out in the morning to go and see the ceremonies. Directed by the current of people to the chapel, he went thither, and asked for admittance. It was the custom first to receive the reverend clergy and the ladies, who had privileged seats reserved for them—the world at large being kept out till these were accommodated: a fact which shows that our Puritan ancestors, if they did not hold women to be divine, placed them on the same level as divines. The doorkeeper scanned Major L . . . . as he came up to the place, and observing him to be a good-looking gentleman in black, with a tinge of powder on his coat-collar, set him down as a minister of the Gospel, and so let him pass. The sexton within took him in charge, and placed him in the clerical quarter between two old D. D.'s—Dr. Perkins, of West Hartford, and Dr. Marsh, of Wethersfield, each having the Five Points sticking out—the one from his gray locks and the other from his frizzed wig—as plainly as if they had been emblazoned on a banner.

The major, with the conscious ease of his genial nature and southern breeding, took his seat and surveyed the scene. His gaze soon fell upon a battery of eyes—beautiful, yet dangerous—that ran along the gallery. Unconscious of the sanctity and saintliness

of his position, he half rose and made a low and gracious bow to the ladies above, as if to challenge their whole artillery. Every eye in the house was thus drawn toward him. Before he had time to compose himself, Miss F . . . . , one of the belles of the day, came down the broad aisle, full upon him ! He had never seen any thing so marvellously beautiful—at once so simple and so superb, so much a woman and so much a divinity. He held his breath till she had passed, when he turned suddenly to Rev. Dr. Marsh, and giving him a slap on his shoulder—which dislodged a shower of powder from his wig—exclaimed, “By all the gods, sir, there is Venus herself !”

It is not easy to conceive of the consternation of all around, and especially of the reverend clergy. Their grizzled hair stood out, as if participating in the general horror. What could possess their reverend brother ? Was he suddenly beset by the Evil One, thus to utter the unhallowed name of Venus in the house of God ? It was indeed a mystery. Gradually, and one by one, they left the infected pew, and Major L . . . . , finding himself alone, quietly pocketed the joke, which, however, he often repeated to his friends after his return to Virginia.

This legend refers to a date some dozen years subsequent to the era of Grace Ingersoll, and which therefore shows that the traditional beauty of the New Haven ladies had not then declined. I now return to my story. From the first view of that fair lady,

M. Grellet was a doomed man. Familiar with the brilliant court of the Parisian capital, he might have passed by unharmed, even by one as fair as our heroine, had it not been for that simplicity, that Puritanism of look and manner, which belonged to the social climate in which she was brought up—so strongly in contrast to the prescribed pattern graces of a French lady. He came, he saw, he was conquered. Being made captive, he had no other way than to capitulate. He was a man of good family, a fine scholar, and a finished gentleman. He made due and honorable proposals, and was accepted—though on the part of the parents with many misgivings. Marriage ensued, and the happy pair departed for France.

This took place in 1806. M. Grellet held a high social position, and on his arrival at Paris, it was a matter of propriety that his bride should be presented at court. Napoleon was then in the full flush of his imperial glory. It must have been with some palpitations of heart that the New Haven girl—scarcely turned of eighteen years, and new to the great world—prepared to be introduced to the glittering circle of the Tuileries, and under the eye of the emperor himself. As she was presented to him, in the midst of a dazzling throng, blazing with orders and diamonds, she was a little agitated, and her foot was entangled for a moment in her long train—then an indispensable part of the court costume. Napo-



leon, who, with all his greatness, never rose to the dignity of a gentleman, said in her hearing, "*Voilà de la gaucherie américaine !*" American awkwardness ! Perhaps a certain tinge of political bitterness mingled in the speech, for Jerome had been seduced into marriage by the beauty of an American lady, greatly to the chagrin of his aspiring and unprincipled brother. At all events, though he saw the blush his rudeness had created, a malicious smile played upon his lips, indicative of that contempt of the feelings of women, which was one of his characteristics.\*

Madame Grellet, however, survived the shock of this discourtesy, which signalized her entry into fashionable life. She soon became a celebrity in the court circles, and always maintained pre-eminence, alike for beauty of person, grace of manners, and delicacy and dignity of character. More than once she had her revenge upon the emperor, when in the center of an admiring circle, he, with others, paid homage to her fascinations. Yet this transplantation of the fair Puritan, even to the Paradise of fashion, was not healthful.

M. Grellet became one of Bonaparte's receivers-general, and took up his residence in the department of the Dordogne—though spending the winters in Paris.

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\* Napoleon's estimate of woman was very low : it was his cherished opinion that the orientals understood much better how to dispose of the female sex than the Europeans. There was a brusquerie, a precipitancy in his manner toward women, both in public and private, which his greatest admirers admit to have been repugnant to every feeling of female delicacy. See *Alison's Europe*, vol. ix. p. 151.



Upon the fall of Napoleon, he lost his office, but was reappointed during the "hundred days," only to lose it again upon the final restoration of Louis XVIII. The shadows now gathered thick and dark around him. His wife having taken a violent cold was attacked with pleurisy, which resulted in a gradual decline. Gently but surely her life faded away. Death loves a shining mark, and at the early age of five-and-twenty she descended to the tomb. With two lovely daughters—the remembrances of his love and his affliction—M. Grellet returned to the south of France, and in the course of years, he too was numbered with the dead.

Almost half a century passed away, and the memory of Grace Ingersoll had long been obliterated from my mind, when it was accidentally recalled. One evening, being at the Tuileries—among the celebrities of the world's most brilliant court—I saw her brother, R. I. Ingersoll. It was curious to meet here with one to whom I had not spoken—though I had occasionally seen him—since we were boys together in Ridgefield. The last incident associated with him in my memory was that we played mumbletepeg together on the green mound, beneath the old Ingersoll butonwoods. He was now the American Ambassador to Russia, and on his way thither, and I was a chance sojourner in Paris.

We met as if we were old friends. At length I recollected his sister Grace, and asked if her children

were living. He replied in the affirmative, and that he was on the point of paying them a visit. I saw him a month afterward, and he told me that he had just returned from the south of France, where he had enjoyed a most interesting stay of a fortnight with his nieces. One—the elder—was married, and had children around her. She was the wife of an eminent physician, and in easy circumstances—occupying a good social position. She was a charming person, and, as he thought, possessed something of the appearance and character of his lost sister. He found that she could sing the simple Connecticut ballads—taught her in childhood, perhaps in the cradle—by her mother: she had also some of her sketches in pencil, and other personal mementoes, which she cherished as sacred relics of her parent, who now seemed a saint in her memory. How beautiful and how touching are such remembrances—flowers that cast perfume around the very precincts of the tomb!

The other neice—where was she? In a convent, lost to the world—devoted to God—if indeed to extinguish the lights of life be devotion to Him who gave them! By special favor, however, she was permitted to leave her seclusion for a short period, that she might see her uncle. She came to the house of her sister, and remained there several days. She was a most interesting person, delicate, graceful, sensitive, still alive to all human affections. She was generally cheerful, and entered with a ready

heart into the pleasures of home and friends around her. I shall venture to quote a single passage from a letter on this subject, addressed to me by her uncle. Speaking of his visit above alluded to, he says:

“One day, after we had been talking as usual of America and her American relations, she excused herself to me for a short time, that she might go to her room and write a letter to the convent. She was gone from me much longer than I had expected, and on her return I said to her:

“‘You must have been writing a long letter, if I may judge by the time you have been about it?’

“‘Yes,’ was her reply; ‘but I have not been writing all the while; I have been praying.’

“‘Indeed! Do you pray often?’

“‘Yes—and even more often here than when I am at the convent.’

“‘Why so?’

“‘I fear, my dear uncle, that my affection for you will attach me too much to earth.’”

How strange, how affecting are the vicissitudes of life as we read them in the intimate personal histories of homes and hearts! The direct descendants of the Puritan minister of Ridgefield—the one a mother, blending her name, her lineage, and her language, in the annals of a foreign land; the other, a devotee, seeking in the seclusion of her cell—and perhaps not altogether in vain—“that peace which the world can not give!”

## LETTER XIX.

*Mat Olmstead, the Town Wit—The Salamander Hat—The Great Eclipse—Sharp Logic—Lieutenant Smith, the Town Philosopher—The Purchase of Louisiana—Lewis and Clarke's Exploring Expedition—The Great Meteor—Hamilton and Burr—The Leopard and the Chesapeake—Fulton's Steamboats—Granther Baldwin, the Village Miser.*

MY DEAR C\*\*\*\*\*

Matthew Olmstead, or Mat Olmstead, as he was usually called, was a day laborer, and though his speciality was the laying of stone fences, he was equally adroit at hoeing corn, mowing, and farm-work in general. He was rather short and thick-set, with a long nose, a little bulbous in his latter days—with a ruddy complexion, and a mouth shutting like a pair of nippers—the lips having an oblique dip to the left, giving a keen and mischievous expression to his face, qualified, however, by more of mirth than malice. This feature was indicative of his mind and character, for he was sharp in speech, and affected a crisp, biting brevity, called dry wit. He had also a turn for practical jokes, and a great many of these were told of him, to which, perhaps, he had no historical claim. The following is one of them, and is illustrative of his manner, even if it originated elsewhere.

On a cold stormy day in December—as I received the tale—a man chanced to come into the bar-room

of Keeler's tavern, where Mat Olmstead and several of his companions were lounging. The stranger had on a new hat of the latest fashion, and still shining with the gloss of the iron. He seemed conscious of his dignity, and carried his head in such a manner as to invite attention to it. Mat's knowing eye immediately detected the weakness of the stranger; so he approached him, and said—

“What a very nice hat you've got on. Pray who made it?”

“Oh, it came from New York,” was the reply.

“Well, let me take it,” said Mat.

The stranger took it off his head, gingerly, and handed it to him.

“It is a wonderful nice hat,” said Matthew; “and I see it's a real salamander!”

“Salamander?” said the other. “What's that?”

“Why a real salamander hat won't burn!”

“No? I never heard of that before: I don't believe it's one of that kind.”

“Sartain sure; I'll bet you a mug of flip of it.”

“Well, I'll stand you!”

“Done: now I'll just put it under the fore-stick?”

“Well.”

It being thus arranged, Mat put the hat under the fore-stick into a glowing mass of coals. In an instant it took fire, collapsed, and rolled into a black, crumpled mass of cinders.

“I du declare,” said Mat Olmstead, affecting great

astonishment—"it ain't a salamander hat arter all. Well; I'll pay the flip!"

Yet wit is not always wisdom. Keen as this man was as to things immediately before him, he was of narrow understanding. He seemed not to possess the faculty of reasoning beyond his senses. He never would admit that the sun was fixed, and that the world turned round. In an argument upon this point before an audience of his class, he would have floored Sir John Herschel or Lord Rosse by his homely but pointed ridicule.

I remember that when the great solar eclipse of 1806 was approaching, he with two other men were at work in one of our fields, not far from the house. The eclipse was to begin at ten or eleven o'clock, and my father sent an invitation to the workmen to come up and observe it through some pieces of smoked glass. They came, though Mat ridiculed the idea of an eclipse—not but the thing might happen—but it was idle to suppose it could be foretold. While they were waiting and watching for the great event, my father explained that the light of the sun upon the earth was to be interrupted by the intrusion of the moon, and that this was to produce a transient night upon the scene around us.

Mat laughed with that low scoffing chuckle, with which a woodchuck, safe in his rocky den, replies to the bark of a besieging dog.

"So you don't believe this?" said my father

"No," said Mat, shaking his head, and bringing his lips obliquely together, like the blades of a pair of shears. "I don't believe a word of it. You say, Parson Goodrich, that the sun is fixed, and don't move?"

"Yes, I say so."

"Well: didn't you preach last Sunday out of the 10th chapter of Joshua?"

"Yes."

"And didn't you tell us that Joshua commanded the sun and moon to stand still?"

"Yes."

"Well: what was the use of telling the sun to stand still if it never moved?"

This was a dead shot, especially at a parson, and in the presence of an audience inclined, from the fellowship of ignorance, to receive the argument. Being thus successful, Mat went on.

"Now, Parson Goodrich, let's try it agin. If you turn a thing that's got water in it bottom up, the water'll run out, won't it?"

"No doubt."

"If the world turns round, then, your well will be turned bottom up, and the water'll run out!"

At this point my father applied his eye to the sun through a piece of smoked glass. The eclipse had begun; a small piece was evidently cut off from the rim. My father stated the fact, and the company around looked through the glass and saw that it was so. Mat Olmstead, however, sturdily refused to try it,



and bore on his face an air of supreme contempt, as much as to say, "You don't humbug me!"

But ignorance and denial of the works of God do not interrupt their march. By slow and invisible degrees, a shade crept over the landscape. There was no cloud in the sky, but a chill stole through the atmosphere, and a strange dimness fell over the world. It was midday, yet it seemed like the approach of night. There was something fearful in this, as if the sun was about to be blotted out in the midst of his glory—the light of the world to be extinguished at the moment of its noon! All nature seemed chilled and awed by the strange phenomenon. The birds, with startled looks and ominous notes, left their busy cares and gathered in the thick branches of the trees, where they seemed to hold counsel one with another. The hens, with slow and hesitating steps, set their faces toward their roosts. One old hen, with a brood of chickens, walked along with a tall, halting tread, and sought shelter upon the barn-floor, where she gathered her young ones under her wings, continuing to make a low sound, as if saying—"Hush, my babes, lie still and slumber." At the same time, like many a mother before her, while seeking to bring peace to her offspring, her own heart was agitated with profound anxiety.

I well remember this phenomenon\*—the first of the

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\* This eclipse (June 18th, 1806), being total, attracted great attention. The weather was perfectly calm, and the phenomena exceedingly in

kind I had ever witnessed. Its sublimity absorbed my whole faculties: it seemed to me the veritable, visible work of the Almighty. The ordinary course of nature was, indeed, equally stupendous; but this incident, from its mere novelty, was a startling and impressive display of the mighty mechanism of the skies. Yet, though thus occupied by this seeming conflict of the heavenly bodies, I recollect to have paid some attention to the effect of the scene upon others. Mat Olmstead said not a word; the other workmen were overwhelmed with emotions of awe.

At length the eclipse began to pass away, and nature slowly returned to her equanimity. The birds came forth, and sang a jubilee, as if relieved from some impending calamity. The hum of life again filled the air; the old hen with her brood gayly resumed her rambles, and made the leaves and gravel

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teresting. At the point of greatest obscuration, the air was so chill as to make an overcoat desirable. A short time before this, the darkness in the west assumed the appearance of an approaching thunderstorm. A luminous ring surrounded the moon after the sun was totally hid. Such was the darkness that the time could not be determined by a watch. The number of stars visible was greater than at the full moon.

An account of the scene in Boston thus describes it: "The morning was ushered in with the usual hum of business, which gradually subsided as the darkness advanced. An uninterrupted silence succeeded. A fresh breeze which had prevailed, now ceased, and all was calm. The birds retired to rest: the rolling chariot and the rumbling car were no more heard. The axe and the hammer were suspended. Returning light reanimated the face of things. We seemed as in the dawn of creation, when '*God said, Let there be light, and there was light!*' and an involuntary cheer of gratulation burst from the assembled spectators."—*Monthly Anthology*, 1806.

fly with her invigorated scratchings. The workmen, too, having taken a glass of grog, returned thoughtfully to their labors.

"After all," said one of the men, as they passed along to the field, "I guess the parson was right about the sun and the moon."

"Well, perhaps he was," said Mat; "but then Joshua was wrong."

Notwithstanding this man's habitual incredulity, he had still his weak side, for he was a firm believer in ghosts—not ghosts in general, but two that he had seen himself. Like most other ghost-seers, he patronized none but his own. These were of enormous size, white and winged like angels. He had seen them one dark night as he was going to his house—a little brown tenement, situated on a lonesome lane that diverged to the left from the high-road to Salem. It was very late, and Mat had spent the evening at the tavern, like Tam O'Shanter; like him, he "was na fou, but just had plenty"—a circumstance, I must say, rather uncommon with him, for he was by no means a tippler, beyond the habits of that day. It is probable that all modern ghosts are revealed only to the second-sight of alcohol, insanity, or the vapors; even in this case of Mat Olmstead's, it turned out that his two angels were a couple of white geese, whom he had startled into flight, as he stumbled upon them quietly snoozing in the joint of a rail fence!

It has often appeared to me that Mat Olmstead was

a type—a representative of a class of men not very rare in this world of ours. It is not at all uncommon to find people, and those who are called strong-minded, who are habitual unbelievers in things possible and probable—nay, in things well established by testimony—while they readily become the dupes of the most absurd illusions and impositions. Dr. Johnson, it is stated, did not believe in the great earthquake of Lisbon in 1755, until six months after it had happened, while he readily accepted the egregious deception of the Cock Lane Ghost. In our day we see people—and sharp ones too—who reject the plainest teachings of common sense, sanctioned by the good and wise of centuries, and follow with implicit faith some goose of the imagination, like Joe Smith or Brigham Young. These are Mat Olmsteads, a little intoxicated by their own imaginations, and in their night of ignorance and folly, they fall down and worship the grossest and goosiest of illusions.

I now turn to a different character, Lieutenant, or as we all called him, *Leftenant* Smith. He has been already introduced to you, but a few touches are still necessary to complete his portrait. He was a man of extensive reading, and large information. He was also some sixty years old, and had stored in his memory the results of his own observation and experience. He read the newspapers, and conversed with travelers—thus keeping up with the march of events. He affected philosophy, and deemed himself the great

intelligencer of the town. If he was thus rich in lore, he dearly loved to dispense it, asking only in return attentive listeners. He liked discussion, provided it was all left to himself. He was equal to all questions: with my father, he dilated upon such high matters as the Purchase of Louisiana; Lewis and Clarke's Exploring Expedition; the death of Hamilton in the duel with Aaron Burr; the attack of the Leopard on the Chesapeake;\* Fulton's attempts at steam navigation, and the other agitating topics of

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\* These several events, which have now passed into the mist of distance, all caused great excitement at the time they transpired.

The *Purchase of Louisiana*, in 1803, was made by our ministers in France, Livingston and Monroe, of Bonaparte, then "Consul for life," for the sum of fifteen millions of dollars. Though the treaty was wholly unauthorized, our government accepted and ratified it. Jefferson, then President, sanctioned and promoted it, though he knew it to be unconstitutional, as has since appeared by his private correspondence: a fact the more remarkable, as he had always pretended to make a strict construction of the Constitution a cardinal political principle. The federalists opposed the treaty, as unconstitutional, and as a destruction of the balance between the free States and slave States, established by that instrument. The democratic party, knowing the truth of all this, but having a majority, accepted the treaty. Though apparently a beneficial measure—the mode in which it was effected, has laid the foundation of the most alarming evils. This example of a palpable violation of the Constitution by Jefferson—the great apostle of democracy—and sanctioned and glorified by that dominant party, has deprived that instrument of much of its binding force upon the conscience of the country. Hence, it has become the constant subject of invasion and violation by party. If our government is ever overthrown, its death-blow will be traced to this act. Had the true course been adopted—that of a modification of the Constitution by the people—no doubt that stipulations in respect to slavery would have been imposed, which would have prevented its present enormous extension, and saved the country from the irritating difficulties in which that subject now involves us.

It is a matter worthy of remark that this first violation of the Constitution came from the strict constructionists: it is from them also, at the

those times, as they came one after another. He was profound upon the sources of the Nile and the Niger, learned upon the site of Eldorado, and magniloquent upon Napoleon, then making the whole earth resound with his ominous march toward universal dominion. To a humble auditory of men and boys, gathered by chance—as on a wet day, or a Saturday afternoon, in the stoop of Keeler's tavern—he told about Putnam and the wolf, General Stark and his wife Molly, with variations of Washington and the war.

present day, that we hear that instrument made the constant object of threatened nullification or repudiation.

*Lewis and Clarke's Expedition to the Pacific*, across the continent by way of the sources of the Missouri, began in 1803 and was completed in 1806. This was made the theme of great eulogy by the friends of Jefferson, whose scientific pretensions provoked abundance of ridicule in his opponents. In January, 1807, a dinner was given at Washington to Capt. Lewis, in compliment and congratulation for his success in the expedition. Joel Barlow produced a song on the occasion, full of ridiculous bombast. One verse will give an idea of it:

“With the same soaring genius thy Lewis ascends,  
And seizes the car of the sun;  
O'er the sky-propping hills, and high waters he bends,  
And gives the proud earth a new zone.”

This was sarcastically parodied by John Q. Adams, who did not disdain to make the domestic frailties of Jefferson the object of his satire. One verse is as follows, it having reference to Barlow's suggestion that the name of the Columbia river should be changed to Lewis' river.

“Let Dusky Sally henceforth bear  
The name of Isabella;  
And let the mountains all of salt,  
Be christen'd Monticella.  
The hog with navel on his back,  
Tom Paine may be when drunk, sir;  
And Joel call'd the prairie dog,  
Which once was call'd a skunk, sir.”

It is curious and instructive to know that soon after this (March, 1808), J. Q. Adams, having lost caste with the federalists of Massachusetts,



I have an impression that Lieut. Smith after all, was not very profound ; but to me he was a miracle of learning. I listened to his discussions with very little interest, but his narratives engaged my whole attention. These were always descriptive of actual events, for he would have disdained fiction : from them I derived a satisfaction that I never found in fables. The travels of Mungo Park, his strange adventures and melancholy death—which about those days transpired through the newspapers, and all of which Lieutenant

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went to Jefferson, and accused them of treasonable designs, and was consequently made a good democrat, and sent as Minister to Russia in 1809. The transformations of politicians are often as wonderful as those of Harlequin.

The *Death of Alexander Hamilton*, July 11, 1804, in a duel with Aaron Burr, the Vice-President of the United States, produced the most vivid emotions of mingled regret and indignation. Hamilton, though in private life not without blemishes, was a man of noble character and vast abilities. Burr was in every thing false and unprincipled. He feared and envied Hamilton, and with the express purpose of taking his life, forced him into the conflict. Hamilton fell, fatally wounded, at the first fire, and Burr, like another Cain, fled to the South, and at last to Europe, before the indignation of the whole nation. After many years he returned—neglected, shunned, despised—yet lingering on to the year 1836, when at the age of eighty he died, leaving his blackened name to stand by the side of that of Benedict Arnold.

The *Attack of the British ship-of-war Leopard on the U. S. ship Chesapeake*, took place off Hampton Roads, in June, 1807. The latter, commanded by Commodore Barron, was just out of port, and apprehending no danger, was totally unprepared for action. The commander of the British vessel demanded four sailors of the Chesapeake, claimed to be deserters, and as these were not surrendered, he poured his broadsides into the American vessel, which was speedily disabled. He then took the four seamen, and the Chesapeake put back to Norfolk. This audacious act was perpetrated under the “right of search,” as maintained by Great Britain. The indignation of the American people knew no bounds : Jefferson demanded apology, and the British government immediately offered it. It was not the policy of our President, however, to settle the matter with Great Britain : so this difficulty was kept along



Smith had at his tongue's end—excited my interest and my imagination even beyond the romances of Sinbad the Sailor and Robinson Crusoe.

In the year 1807, an event occurred, not only startling in itself, but giving exercise to all the philosophical powers of Lieutenant Smith. On the morning of the 14th of December, about daybreak, I had arisen and was occupied in building a fire, this being my daily duty. Suddenly the room was filled with light, and looking up, I saw through the windows a ball of fire, nearly the size of the moon, passing across the heavens from northwest to southeast. It was at an immense height, and of intense brilliancy. Having passed the zenith, it swiftly descended toward the earth: while still at a great elevation it burst, with three successive explosions, into fiery fragments. The report was like three claps of rattling thunder in quick succession.

My father, who saw the light and heard the sounds, declared it to be a meteor of extraordinary magnitude. It was noticed all over the town, and caused great excitement. On the following day the news came that huge fragments of stone had fallen in the adjacent town of Weston, some eight or ten

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for years, and became a proverb, significant of delay and diplomatic chicanery. "*I would as soon attempt to settle the affair of the Chesapeake,*" was a common mode of characterizing any dispute which seemed interminable. Commodore Barron was suspended from his command, and it was some painful allusion to this by Commodore Decatur, that caused a duel between these two persons, which ended in the death of the latter, March 22, 1820.

miles southeast of Ridgefield. The story spread far and wide, and some of the professors of Yale College came to the place, and examined the fragments of this strange visitor from the skies. It appeared that the people in the neighborhood heard the rushing of the stones through the air, as well as the shock when they struck the earth. One, weighing two hundred pounds, fell on a rock, which it splintered—its huge fragments plowing up the ground around to the extent of a hundred feet. One piece, weighing twenty-five pounds, was taken to New Haven, where it is still to be seen, in the mineralogical cabinet of the college. The professors estimated this meteor\* to be half a mile in diameter, and to have traveled through the heavens at the rate of two or three hundred miles a minute.

On this extraordinary occasion the lieutenant came to our house, according to his wont, and for several successive evenings discoursed to us upon the subject. I must endeavor to give you a specimen of his performances.

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\* The extraordinary meteor, here alluded to, was so distinctly observed, as to have settled many points respecting meteoric stones, which were before involved in some doubt. The immense speed of its progress and its enormous size were determined by the fact that it was seen at the moment of its explosion, through a space more than a hundred miles in diameter, and that it passed across the zenith in about ten seconds. It appears probable that it was not a solid mass, nor is it to be supposed that more than a small portion of it fell to the earth when the explosion took place. It must be admitted, however, that we have yet no satisfactory theory as to the origin and nature of these wonderful bodies.

“It seems to me, sir,” said he, addressing my father, “that these meteors, or falling stars, or what not, are very strange things, and have not received due attention from the learned world. They are of great antiquity, sir: their appearance is recorded as far back as 654 B. C. One is spoken of by the elder Pliny, sir, which fell near the town of Gallipoli, in Asia Minor, about 405 B. C. This was to be seen in Pliny’s time—that is, five hundred years afterward, and was then as big as a wagon, sir. From these remote dates down to the present time, these wonderful phenomena have occurred at intervals, so that two hundred instances are on record. It is probable that many more have passed unnoticed by man, either in the night, or in remote places, or in the vast oceans which cover two thirds of the earth’s surface. In general, sir, these meteors send down showers of stones, of various sizes. Some of the fragments are no bigger than a pea; others are of greater magnitude—in one instance weighing twenty-five thousand pounds.

“Well, sir, this subject becomes one of importance, and the inquiry as to what these strange things are, demands attention of the philosopher. I have studied the subject profoundly; I have looked into the various theories, and am by no means satisfied with any of them, sir. Some suppose these meteors to be cast out of the volcanic craters of the moon, but that supposition I deem incompatible with Scripture, and the general aspect of the universe. The Bible represents

nature as harmonious : it speaks of the morning stars as singing together. It is impious, then, to suppose that the moon, a mere satellite of the earth, can be in a state of rebellion, and discharging its destructive batteries upon the earth, its lord and master. Besides, the moon thus constantly firing at the earth would, in the course of time, be all shot away."

"That is," said my father, "it would get out of ammunition, as the Americans did at Bunker Hill?"

"Just so, sir : therefore I look upon these as crude opinions, arising from a superficial view of the universe. I have examined the subject, sir, and am inclined to the opinion that these phenomena are animals revolving in the orbits of space between the heavenly bodies. Occasionally, one of them comes too near the earth, and rushing through our atmosphere with immense velocity, takes fire and explodes !"

"This is rather a new theory, is it not?" said my father. "It appears that these meteoric stones, in whatever country they fall, are composed of the same ingredients—mostly silex, iron, and nickel : these substances would make rather a hard character, if endowed with animal life, and especially with the capacity of rushing through space at the rate of two or three hundred miles a minute, and then exploding?"

"These substances I consider only as the shell or the animal, sir."

"You regard the creature as a huge shell-fish, then?"

“Not necessarily a fish, for a whole order of nature, called *Crustacea*, has the bones on the outside. In this case of meteors, I suppose them to be covered with some softer substance, for it frequently happens that a jelly-like matter comes down with meteoric stones. This resembles coagulated blood; and thus what is called bloody rain or snow, has often fallen over great spaces of country. Now, when the chemists analyze these things—the stones, which I consider the bones, and the jelly, which I consider the fat, and the rain, which I consider the blood—they find them all to consist of the same elements—that is, silex, iron, nickel, &c. None but my animal theory will harmonize all these phenomena, sir.”

“But,” interposed my father, “consider the enormous size of your aerial monsters. I recollect to have read only a short time since, that in the year 1803, about one o’clock in the afternoon, the inhabitants of several towns of Normandy, in France, heard noises in the sky, like the peals of cannon and musketry, with a long-continued roll of drums. Looking upward, they saw something like a small cloud at an immense elevation, which soon seemed to explode, sending its vapor in all directions. At last a hissing noise was heard, and then stones fell, spreading over a country three miles wide by eight miles long. No less than two thousand pieces were collected, weighing from one ounce to seventeen pounds. That must

have been rather a large animal—eight miles long and three miles wide !”

“What is that, sir, in comparison with the earth, which Kepler, the greatest philosopher that ever lived, conceived to be a huge beast?”

“Yes ; but did he prove it ?”

“He gave good reasons for it, sir. He found very striking analogies between the earth and animal existences : such as the tides, indicating its breathing through vast internal lungs ; earthquakes, resembling eructations from the stomach ; and volcanoes, suggestive of boils, pimples, and other cutaneous eruptions.”

“I think I have seen your theory set to verse.”

Saying this, my father rose, and bringing a book, read as follows :

“To me things are not as to vulgar eyes  
I would all nature’s works anatomize :  
This world a living monster seems to me,  
Rolling and sporting in the aerial sea :  
The soil encompasses her rocks and stones,  
As flesh in animals encircles bones.  
I see vast ocean, like a heart in play,  
Pant systole and diastole every day,  
And by unnumber’d *venus* streams supplied,  
Up her broad rivers force the aerial tide.  
The world’s great lungs, monsoons and trade-winds show--  
From east to west, from west to east they blow .  
The hills are pimples, which earth’s face defile,  
And burning Etna an eruptive boil.  
On her high mountains living forests grow,  
And downy grass o’erspreads the vales below :

From her vast body perspirations rise,  
Condense in clouds and float beneath the skies.”\*

My father having closed the book, the profound lieutenant, who did not conceive it possible that a thing so serious could be made the subject of a joke, said :

“ A happy illustration of my philosophy, sir, though I can not commend the form in which it is put. If a man has any thing worth saying, sir, he should use prose. Poetry is only proper when one wishes to embellish folly, or dignify trifles. In this case it is otherwise, I admit; and I am happy to find so powerful a supporter of my animal theory of meteors. I shall consider the subject, and present it for the consideration of the philosophic world.”

One prominent characteristic of this our Ridgefield philosopher was, that when a great event came about, he fancied that he had foreseen and predicted it from the beginning. Now about this time Fulton actually succeeded in his long-sought application of steam to

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\* This is from the “ *Oration which might have been delivered,*” by Francis Hopkinson, LL. D., published in a volume entitled, “ *American Poems, selected and original,*” Litchfield, Conn., 1793. This work I considered, in my youth, one of the marvels of American literature : in point of fact it comprised nearly all the living American poetry at that era. The chief names in its galaxy of stars were, Trumbull, the author of M’Fingal, Timothy Dwight, Joel Barlow, David Humphries, Lemuel Hopkins, William Livingston, Richard Alsop, Theodore Dwight, and Philip Freneau. It is now not without interest, especially as one of the signs of those times—the taste, tone, scope, and extent of the current indigenous poets and poetry—only sixty years ago. At that era Connecticut was the focal point of poetic inspiration on this continent



navigation. The general opinion of the country had been, all along, that he was a monomaniac, attempting an impossibility. He was the standing theme of cheap newspaper wit, and the general God-send of orators, who were hard run for a joke. Lieutenant Smith, who was only an echo of what passed around him, during the period of Fulton's labors, participated in the current contempt; but when the news came, in October, 1807, that he had actually succeeded—that one of his boats had walked the waters like a thing of life, at the rate of five miles an hour, against the current of the Hudson river—then, still an echo of the public voice—did he greatly jubilate.

"I told you so: I told you so!" was his first exclamation, as he entered the house, swelling with the account.

"Well, and what is it?" said my father.

"Fulton has made his boat go, sir! I told you how it would be, sir. It opens a new era in the history of navigation. We shall go to Europe in ten days, sir!"

Now you will readily understand, that in these sketches I do not pretend to report with literal precision the profound discourses of our Ridgefield savant; I remember only the general outlines, the rest being easily suggested. My desire is to present the portrait of one of the notables of our village—one whom I remember with pleasure, and whom I conceive to be a representative of the amiable, and per-

haps useful race of fussy philosophers to be found in most country villages. He was, in fact, a sort of Yankee Pickwick, full of knowledge, and a yearning desire to make everybody share in his learning. As was proper, he was a prophet, an "I-TOLD-YOU-SO!" who foresees every thing after it has happened. Unlike Mat Olmstead, who believed too little, perhaps he believed too much: for whatever he saw in print, he considered as proved. If he ever doubted any thing, it was when he had not been the first to reveal it to the village. Yet whatever his foibles, I was certainly indebted to him for many hours of amusement, and no doubt for a great deal of information.

From the town oracle, I turn to the town miser. Granther Baldwin, as I remember him, was threescore years and ten—perhaps a little more. He was a man of middle size, but thin, wiry, and bloodless, and having his body bent forward at a sharp angle with his hips, while his head was thrown back over his shoulders—giving his person the general form of a reversed letter Z. His complexion was brown and stony; his eye gray and twinkling, with a nose and chin almost meeting like a pair of forceps. His hair—standing out with an irritable frizz—was of a rusty gray. He was always restless, and walked and rode with a sort of haggish rapidity. At church, he wriggled in his seat, tasted fennel, and bobbed his head up and down and around. He could not afford tobacco, so he chewed, with a constant activity, either an oak chip or the

roots of elecampane, which was indigenous in the lane near his house. On Sundays he was decent in his attire, but on week-days he was a beggarly curiosity. It was said that he once exchanged hats with a scarecrow, and cheated scandalously in the bargain. His boots—a withered wreck of an old pair of white-tops—dangled over his shrunken calves, and a coat in tatters fluttered from his body. He rode a switch-tailed, ambling mare, which always went like the wind, shaking the old gentleman merrily from right to left, and making his bones, boots, and rags rustle like his own bush-harrow. Familiar as he was, the school-boys were never tired of him, and when he passed, “There goes Granther Baldwin!” was the invariable ejaculation.

I must add—in order to complete the picture—that in contrast to his elvish leanness and wizard activity, his wife was bloated with fat, and either from indolence or lethargy, dozed away half her life in the chimney corner. It was said, and no doubt truly, that she often went to sleep at the table, sometimes allowing a rind of bacon to stick out of her mouth till her nap was over. I have a faint notion of having seen this myself. She spent a large part of her life in cheating her husband out of *fourpence-ha’pennies*,\* of which more than a peck were found secreted in an old chest, at her death.

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\* According to the old New England currency, the Spanish sixteenth of a dollar—the sixpence of New York and the picayune of Louisiana—

It was the boast of this man that he had risen from poverty to wealth, and he loved to describe the process of his advancement. He always worked in the corn-field till it was so dark that he could see his hoe strike fire. When in the heat of summer he was obliged occasionally to let his cattle breathe, he sat on a sharp stone, lest he should rest too long. He paid half a dollar to the parson for marrying him, which he always regretted, as one of his neighbors got the job done for a pint of mustard-seed. On fast-days, he made his cattle go without food as well as himself. He systematically stooped to save a crooked pin or a rusty nail, as it would cost more to make it than to pick it up. Such were his boasts—or at least, such were the things traditionally imputed to him.

He was withal a man of keen faculties ; sagacious in the purchase of land, as well as in the rotation of crops. He was literally honest, and never cheated any one out of a farthing, according to his arithmetic—though he had sometimes an odd way of reckoning. It is said that in his day—the Connecticut age of blue—the statute imposed a fine of one dollar for profane swearing. During this period, Granther Baldwin employed a carpenter who was somewhat notoriously addicted to this vice. Granther kept a strict account of every instance of transgression, and when the job

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was fourpence-halfpenny. This word was formerly the shibboleth of the Yankees—every one being set down as a New Englander who said *fourpence-ha'penny*.

was done, and the time came to settle the account, he said to the carpenter—

“You’ve worked with me thirty days, I think, Mr. Kellogg?”

“Yes, Granther,” was the reply.

“At a dollar a day, that makes thirty dollars, I think?”

“Yes, Granther.”

“Mr. Kellogg, I am sorry to observe that you have a very bad habit of taking the Lord’s name in vain.”

“Yes, Granther.”

“Well, you know that’s agin the law.”

“Yes, Granther.”

“And there’s a fine of one dollar for each offense.”

“Yes, Granther.”

“Well—here’s the account I’ve kept, and I find you’ve broken the law twenty-five times; that is, sixteen times in April, and nine in May. At a dollar a time, that makes twenty-five dollars, don’t it?”

“Yes, Granther.”

“So then, twenty-five from thirty leaves five: it appears, therefore, that there is a balance of five dollars due to you. How’ll you take it, Mr. Kellogg? In cash, or in my way—say in ’taters, pork, and other things?”

At this point, the carpenter’s brow lowered, but with a prodigious effort at composure, he replied—

“Well, Granther, you may keep the five dollars,

and I'll take it out in *my* way, that is, in swearing!" Upon this he hurled at the old gentleman a volley of oaths, quite too numerous and too profane to repeat.

Now I do not vouch for the precise accuracy of this story in its application to Granther Baldwin. I only say it was one of the things laid to him. A man of marked character is very apt to be saddled with all the floating tales that might suit him. I remember once to have told a well-authenticated story of Ethan Allen, when Dr. L . . . , a German professor, being present, laughed outright, saying, "I have heard my father tell the same story of old Baron Von Skippenhutten, and declare that he was present when the thing happened!"

I need not enlarge upon the adventures between Granther Baldwin and the school-boys, who took delight in pocketing his apples, pears, and nuts. These things were so abundant in those days, that everybody picked and ate, without the idea of trespass. But Granther's heart was sorely afflicted at these dispensations. He could not bear the idea of losing a pocketful of apples, or a handful of butternuts, chestnuts, or walnuts, even if they lay decaying in heaps upon his grounds. As I have said, his house and farm were close by West Lane school, and it was quite a matter of course that his hard, unrelenting conservatism should clash with the ideas of the natural rights of schoolboys, entertained by such

free-born youths as those at this seminary. They loved the fruit, and considered liberal pickings to be their birthright. Had the old gentleman let them alone, or had he smiled on them in their small pilferings, they had, no doubt, been moderate in their plunder. But when he made war on them—even unto sticks, stones, and pitchforks—the love of fun and the glory of mischief added an indescribable relish to their forays upon his woods and orchards. I confess to have been drawn in more than once to these misdoings. Perhaps, too, I was sometimes a leader in them. I confess, with all due contrition, that when the old miser, hearing the walnuts rattle down by the bushel in the forest back of his house—knowing that mischief was in the wind—came forth in a fury, pitchfork in hand; when I have heard his hoarse yet impotent threats; I have rather enjoyed than sympathized with his agonies. Poor old gentleman—let me now expiate my sins by doing justice to his memory!

It is true he was a miser—selfish and mean by nature. Born in poverty, and only rising from this condition by threescore years and ten of toil and parsimony, was it possible for him to be otherwise? What a burden of sin and misery is often laid upon a single soul! And yet Granther Baldwin was not wholly lost. He professed religion, and the New Man wrestled bravely with the Old Man. The latter got the better too often, no doubt; for avarice once lodged



in the soul is usually the last vice that capitulates to Christianity. It so readily assumes the guise of respectable virtues—frugality, providence, industry, prudence, economy—that it easily dupes the heart that gives it shelter.

And besides, religion in its sterner exercises forbids the pleasures of life, in which mankind generally content the universal craving for excitement. The moral constitution of man—the mind and the heart—have their hunger and their thirst as well as the body. These can not be annihilated: if they are not appeased in one way, they will be in another. Old Burton says they are like badgers: if you stop up one hole, they will dig out at another. And thus, if a man is too rigid in his creed to allow the genial excitements of society, he is very likely to satisfy himself with something worse. He generally resorts to secret indulgences of some kind, and thus lays the axe at the root of all religion, by establishing a system of hypocrisy. To a man thus situated, the respectable vice of avarice is commended, for while, as I have said, it takes the guise of various virtues, it furnishes gratification to the desire of excitement by its accumulations, its growing heaps of gold, its enlarging boundaries of land, its spreading network of bonds and mortgages, its web of debt woven at the rate of compound interest over the bodies and souls of men—debtors, borrowers, speculators, and other worshipers of Mammon.

It is so easy therefore to be misled by this demon of avarice, that I shall deal gently with it in Granther Baldwin's case, seeing that he had so many temptations in his nature and his position. Nevertheless, I am bound to say that it so dried up the fountains of his heart as to render him absolutely insensible even to the idea of personal appearance—as if God gave man his own image to wear a scarecrow's hat, and boots that a beggar would despise. But for his avarice, he might have discovered that want of decency is want of sense; but for his avarice, his heart might have been the sun of a system, circling around the fireside and diffusing its blessings over each member of the family; but for his avarice, he might, being rich, and increased in goods, have even enlarged his heart, and been the benefactor of the neighborhood.

Still, I shall not parade these sins before you: let me rather speak of the old man's virtues. He was a firm believer in the Bible, and set the example of implicit submission to its doctrines, as he discovered them. He made an open profession of his faith, and in sickness and in health, in rain and shine, in summer and winter, he sustained the established institutions of religion. No weather ever prevented him from attending church, though he lived nearly two miles from the place of worship. Often have I seen him on a Sunday morning, facing the keen blast, plodding his way thither, when it seemed as if his

heart must be reduced to an icicle. He attended all funerals within the precincts of the place. He was present at every town meeting: he paid his taxes, civil and ecclesiastical, at the appointed day. He kept thanksgivings and fasts—the first gingerly, and the last with all his heart. He had a clock and a noon-mark, and when they varied, he insisted that the sun was wrong. He believed profoundly in arithmetic, and submitted, without repining, to its decrees. Here was the skeleton of a man and a Christian; all that it wanted was a soul!

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## LETTER XX.

### *A Long Farewell to Ridgefield.*

MY DEAR C\*\*\*\*\*

In the autumn of 1808 an event occurred which suddenly gave a new direction to my life, and took me from Ridgefield, never to return to it, but as a visitor. My narrative is therefore about to take a final leave of my birthplace.

Here, my dear C . . . , endeth the first lesson of my life—that portion of it which pertaineth to Ridgefield. Peradventure this has been drawn out in such length as to have taxed your patience beyond endurance. If such be the truth, I beg to offer as palliation, that to me these scenes, incidents, and characters—simple and commonplace though they be—seem not unworthy of being recorded, for the very reason that they are thus common, and therefore are representatives of our New England village people as they were a brief half century ago, and as they are now. If as such, they present a spectacle of little interest—I beg to suggest further, that the picture at least affords a means of measuring the silent but steady advance of society among us; thus refuting the calumnies of the misanthrope, and vindicating the hopes of the sincere lover of mankind. I admit that the scale upon which my observations are made—that of a mere country village—is small, but in proportion to its minuteness, is the certainty of the conclusions we may draw. A survey of a great city or a large space of country, may be deceptive from its extent and the complexity of its details; but in respect to such a community as that I have described, it is impossible to be mistaken. The progress there in wealth, taste, refinement, morals—all that constitutes civilization—is as certain as the advance of time. Nor is this village an exception to the tendency of things in American society: it may differ in the celerity of its

progress, but in its general experience it unquestionably sympathizes with New England at large, and to some extent with the entire United States.

And one thing more: if Ridgefield is thus a representative of the New England village, I may remark that here the comparison ends: at least, there are no such villages in any portion of the Old World: none where the whole people are thus independent in their circumstances; where all are thus educated, so far as to be able to form just opinions upon the great questions of life, in religion, government, and morals; none where the people, conscious of their power, are thus in the habit of forming their own opinions from their own reflections; none where the majority are thus living on their own lands and in their own tenements; none where a general sentiment of equality and good neighborhood thus levels the distinctions of wealth and condition; none where religion and education, left to the free will of the people, thus furnish, in the schoolhouses and the churches, the chief visible and permanent monuments of society.

The view I have taken suggests also another idea, and that is the radical difference between the constitution of things in our country and all others. In all the continent of Europe, the power, genius, intelligence of each country is centralized in the capital. It is and has been, from time immemorial, the design of kings and princes of all dynasties, to make the seat of the government the focal point of light—of

learning, taste, fashion, wealth, and influence. The Court is not only the head but the heart of the body politic: the country—the people at large—the limbs and members—are but the subservient tools and instruments of the privileged orders.

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## LETTER XXI.

*Farewell to Ridgefield—Farewell to Home—Danbury—My new Vocation—  
A Revolutionary Patriarch—Life in a Country Store—Homesickness—  
My Brother-in-law—Lawyer Hatch.*

MY DEAR C\*\*\*\*\*

It was in the autumn of the year 1808, as I have intimated, that a sudden change took place in my prospects. My eldest sister had married a gentleman by the name of Cooke, in the adjacent town of Danbury. He was a merchant, and being in want of a clerk, offered me the place. It was considered a desirable situation by my parents, and overlooking my mechanical aptitudes, they accepted it at once, and at the age of fifteen I found myself installed in a country store.

This arrangement gratified my love of change, common to the young and inexperienced. At the same time, Danbury was a much more considerable town than Ridgefield, and going to live there naturally suggested the idea of advancement, especially as I was to exchange my uncertain prospects for a positive profession. However, I little comprehended

what it meant to say farewell to home: I have since learned its significance. In thus bidding adieu to the paternal roof, we part with youth forever—words of mournful import, which every succeeding year, to the very end, impresses on the heart. We part with the spring-tide of life, which strews every path with flowers, fills the air with poetry, and the heart with rejoicing. We part with that genial spirit which endows familiar objects—brooks, lawns, play-grounds, hillsides—with its own sweet illusions: we bid adieu to this and its fairy companionships. Even if, in after life, we return to the scenes of our childhood, they have lost the bloom of youth, and in its place we see the wrinkles of that age which has graven its hard lines upon our hearts.

Farewell to home implies something even yet more serious: we relinquish, and often with exultation, the tender providence of parents, in order to take upon ourselves the dread responsibilities of independence. What seeming infatuation it is, that renders us thus impatient of the guidance of those who gave us being, and who are on earth the brightest reflection of heaven—making us at the same time anxious to spread our untried sails upon an untried sea, and upon a voyage which involves all the chances—evil as well as good—of existence. And yet it is not infatuation—it is instinct. We can not always be young; we can not all remain under the paternal roof. The old birds push the young ones from the nest, and force them to a



trial of their wings. It is the system of nature that impels us to go forth and try our fortunes, and it is a kind Providence, after all, which thus endues us with courage for the outset of our uncertain career.

I was not long in discovering that my new vocation was very different from what I had expected, and very different from my accustomed way of life. My habits had been active, my employments chiefly abroad—in the open air. I was accustomed to be frequently on horseback, and to make excursions to the neighboring towns; I had also enjoyed large personal liberty, which I failed not to use in rambling over the fields and forests. All this was now changed. My duties lay exclusively in the store, and this seemed now my prison. From morning to night I remained here, and as our business was not large, I had many hours upon my hands with nothing to do, but to consider the weariness of my situation. My brother-in-law was always present, and being a man of severe aspect and large ubiquitous eyes, I felt a sort of restraint, which, for a time, was agonizing. I had consequently pretty sharp attacks of homesickness, a disease which—save that it is not dangerous—is one of the most distressing to which suffering humanity is exposed.

This state of sin and misery continued for some weeks, during which time I actually revolved various plans of escape from my confinement—such as stealing away at night, making my way to Norwalk, get-

ting on board a sloop, and going as cabin-boy to the West Indies. I am inclined to think that a small impulse might have set me upon some such mad expedition. By degrees, however, I became habituated to my occupation, and as my situation was eligible in other respects, I found myself, ere long, reconciled to it.

The father and mother of my brother-in-law were aged people living with him, in the same house, and as one family. They were persons of great amiability and excellence of character: the former, Col. Cooke, was eighty years of age, but he had still the perfect exercise of his faculties, and though he had ceased all business, he was cheerful, and took a lively interest in passing events. His career\* had been one of

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\* *Colonel Joseph Platt Cooke*, son of Rev. Samuel Cooke, of Stratfield, now Bridgeport, was one of fourteen children, and born Dec. 24, 1729, (old style): Nov. 22, 1759, he was married to Sarah Benedict: he died Feb. 3, 1816. Their children were Joseph P. Cooke, Thomas Cooke, Elizabeth Cooke, Daniel Benedict Cooke, and Amos Cooke—the latter, my brother-in-law, born Oct. 11, 1773, and deceased Nov. 13, 1810. The Rev. Samuel Cooke, now (1856) of St. Bartholomew's Church, New York, is a son of Daniel B. Cooke, who was Judge of Probate at Danbury for a number of years. To his brother, Joseph P. Cooke, I am indebted for some of the following incidents.

Col. Joseph P. Cooke graduated at Yale College in 1750. He established himself in Danbury, and when the British, under Tryon, having landed at Campo Point, on Long Island Sound, April 25, 1777, marched upon that place, he was colonel of the militia there. Having advice of the advance of the enemy, he sent a messenger to Gen. Silliman, giving the information he had acquired, and asking for troops, ammunition, and instructions. This messenger, coming suddenly upon the invading army, was fired upon, wounded, and taken prisoner.

General Silliman, who was attached to the Connecticut militia, was upon his farm at Fairfield, when he heard of the British expedition. He immediately dispatched messengers to arouse the people, and set

great activity and usefulness. During the Revolution he was a colonel of the Connecticut militia, and upon the death of Gen. Wooster, in the retreat from Danbury, the command devolved upon him, the next in rank. He was greatly esteemed, not only by the community, but by the leading men of the country. He enjoyed the friendship and confidence of Washington, and the acquaintance of Lafayette, Rochambeau, and De Grasse, whom he entertained at his house. He

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out himself for Reading. Here he was joined by the fiery Arnold and the experienced Wooster : altogether they had about seven hundred men—mostly raw militia, fresh from their farms.

So rapid was the march of the British, that the people of Danbury were not informed of their danger, till the enemy were within eight miles of the town. Knowing that the public stores were their object, and well advised of the terrors of a British marauding army, the whole place was a scene of the wildest confusion and alarm. Those who could fly, sought safety in the woods and adjacent villages, taking their women and children with them. The sick and decrepit remained, with a few persons to take care of them.

There were no means of defense in the place : about a hundred and fifty militia, without ammunition, under Colonels Cooke and Huntington, were there, but retired upon the approach of the enemy. Having marched through Weston and Reading, Tryon and his force of two thousand men, reached Danbury in the afternoon of the day subsequent to their landing. Insult to the people and conflagration of the buildings, public and private, followed. The only houses intentionally spared by the enemy were those of the tories ; some other dwellings, however, escaped. Nineteen houses, one meeting-house, and twenty stores and barns, with their contents, were destroyed.

The scenes enacted in this tragedy were in the highest degree appalling. Among the articles consumed were three thousand barrels of pork. The fat of these ran in rivers of flame in the gutters, while the soldiers, intoxicated with liquors they had procured, yelled like demons amid the conflagration, or reeled through the streets, or lay down, like swine, in by-places. It adds horror to the scene to know that a portion of the inhabitants of the town opened their arms to the enemy, and saw with rejoicing the ruin and vengeance wrought upon their friends and neighbors.

was a member of Congress under the Confederation, and subsequently filled the various offices of judge of the County Court, judge of Probate, and member of the Governor's council—receiving for many years a larger popular vote than any other individual of that body. His style of living was liberal, and with a large family, settled in the neighborhood, he was like one of the patriarchs of old—dignified, tranquil—loving and beloved. In manner and dress, he was

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Early on the morning of the next day (Sunday, April 27), while the whole country around was lighted with the flames of Danbury, Tryon, hearing that the militia were gathering from all quarters to attack him, began a rapid retreat, taking the route through Ridgebury and Ridgefield.

Gen. Wooster, who had been joined by Col. Cooke and his men, crossing from Reading, overtook the enemy about two miles north of Ridgefield-street. One of his aids was Stephen Rowe Bradley, afterward, for sixteen years, a senator of the United States from Vermont. A smart skirmish ensued, and forty British prisoners were taken. Unfortunately, at this critical moment, Wooster fell, fatally wounded by a bullet-shot in the groin. This caused a temporary panic, during which the enemy pushed on toward Ridgefield. Here, however, at the head of the street, they were met by the impetuous Arnold, who, with only two hundred men behind a stone wall, boldly confronted them. After a time, they were driven back, and the British made their way to their point of embarkment. The untimely fall of Wooster probably only saved them from surrender, or ignominious loss and defeat.

Among the stores burned in Danbury was that of Col. Cooke—with a loss of one thousand pounds. The British soldiers occupied his house, where they had a riotous time. An old negro slave, who was left behind, waited upon them, and contrived to prevent a good deal of damage. When the marauders heard that the Americans were coming, they took some bundles of straw, set the house on fire, and fled. The old negro put out the flames, and thus saved his master's dwelling. For this he had his freedom, and ever after was supported and cherished, with the consideration due to his conduct.

The following original letter—placed at my disposal by Mrs. Stites, granddaughter of Colonel Cooke—not only throws some pleasing light upon his character, but it presents facts of the deepest and most tragic

strongly marked with the Washingtonian era : he was sedate, courteous, methodical in all his ways : he wore breeches, knee-buckles, shoe-buckles, and a cocked hat, to the last. The amenity and serenity of his countenance and conduct, bespoke the refined gentleman and disciplined Christian. His wife was a sister of the Rev. Noah Benedict, of Woodbury, and inherited the traditionary talent of that branch of the Benedict family. Never have I seen a more

interest. It was written while he was at New York attending to his duties there as a member of Congress.

*[Letter from Colonel Cooke to his son Amos Cooke.]*

NEW YORK, June 3, 1785.

MY DEAR LITTLE SON :

Your letter of the 30th ultimo came safe to hand, but I had not time to return you an answer by the same post, and this may often happen by reason of my quarters being on Long Island. I am very glad to hear that your mamma enjoys a tolerable state of health, and I doubt not but that you will always be very attentive to her comfort. Should she in any good measure reeover her strength, I fear she will undertake some business which may be detrimental to her health. Whenever you observe any thing of that kind, I would have you suggest the thought to her, in a very dutiful manner, telling her that you do it at my desire. Platt did very well in taking the method you mentioned for getting Daniel to New Haven. I hope the Society will adopt some plan for going forward with building the meeting-house, for until they do, I wish not to see the Courts held in Danbury. I am not, however, apprehensive that the Assembly will repeal the act.

There are now six members of Congress, who board at Mr. Hunt's. Our accommodations are very good, and we have no rats to annoy us. We have been honored with a visit from the President and most of the members of Congress, who all admire our situation, which commands a prospect of the whole city, of all the shipping in the harbor and on the stocks (of which there are a very considerable number, one of which being a ship of about three hundred tons, we saw launched yesterday), and of every vessel that either goes out or comes in, of which we see forty or fifty under sail at the same time. But amidst all these pleasing scenes there is something that damps our spirits, and

pleasing spectacle than this reverend couple—at the age of fourscore—both smoking their pipes in the evening, with two generations around them, all looking with affectionate veneration upon the patriarchal pair.

My brother-in-law was a man of decided character, and his portrait deserves a place in these annals. He was graduated at Yale College, and had been qualified for the bar, but his health was feeble, and therefore—chiefly for occupation—he succeeded to the store

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casts a gloom over the whole. At about half a mile's distance from our lodgings, lies the wreck of a ship which was the Jersey Prison Ship, from which so many thousands of our poor countrymen, who had the misfortune during the late war to be taken prisoners, were thrown. I wish I could say buried, for then some part of the British inhumanity would have been concealed, but that was not the case. The banks near which this Prison ship lay are high and sandy. The dead bodies of our friends, only wrapped up in old blankets, were laid at the bottom of the bank, and the sand drawn over them. Soon after we came to live upon Long Island, several of us took a walk that way, and were struck with horror at beholding a large number of human bones, some fragments of flesh not quite consumed, with many pieces of old blankets lying upon the shore. In consequence of a representation made to Congress, they were soon after taken up and buried. But walking along the same place not many days ago, we saw a number more which were washed out, and attempting to bury them ourselves, we found the bank full of them. Such conduct has fixed a stain upon the British character which will not soon be wiped off.

The weather has been so very tempestuous this day, that none of us have attempted to cross the ferry, which is the first time we have failed since we have been here.

It gives me pleasure to observe by your last letter that you improve both in writing and composing; and I hope you will give frequent instances of improvement in the same way.

Give my kind love to your mamma and all the family, and tell Platt I intend to write him by the next post. These from your affectionate parent,

JOSEPH P. COOKE.

Master AMOS COOKE.



which his father had kept before him. Being in easy circumstances, he made no great efforts in business. Though, as I have said, he was of stern aspect, and his manners were somewhat cold and distant, he was always a gentleman, and his substantial character that of a just and kind man. In business, he treated people respectfully, but he never solicited custom: he showed, but never recommended his goods. If his advice were asked, he offered it without regard to his own interest. He gave me no instructions, but left me to the influence of his example. He was of a highly religious turn of mind, not merely performing the accustomed duties of a Christian, but making devotional books a large part of his study. Perhaps he was conscious of failing health, and already heard the monitory voice of that disease which was ere long to terminate his career.

Nevertheless, he was not insensible to the pleasures of cultivated society, and however grave he might be in his general air and manner, he was particularly gratified with the visits of a man, in all things his opposite—Moses Hatch, then a leading lawyer in Danbury. Mr. Cooke was tall, emaciated, somewhat bent, with a large head, and large melancholy eyes. His look was gravity itself, his air meditative, his movements measured, slow, and wavering. 'Squire Hatch,\* on the contrary, was rather short, full-chested,

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\* Moses Hatch was born at Kent, Litchfield county, Conn., A. D. 1780, and died at the same place in 1820, on his return from Saratoga, where



perpendicular, and with a short, quick, emphatic step. His eye was small, gray, and twinkling; his lips sharp and close-set, his hair erect and combed back, giving to his face the keen expression of the old-fashioned flint, set in a gun-lock. You expected, of course, on the least movement to see the fire fly; he was, in fact, a man celebrated for his wit no less than his learning, and he seldom opened his mouth without making a report of one or both.

This person was a frequent visitor to the store, and the long winter which commenced soon after I entered upon my apprenticeship, was not a little enlivened by his conversations with my master. It frequently happened during the deep snows, that the day passed without a single customer, and on these occasions, Lawyer Hatch was pretty sure to make us a visit. It was curious to see these two men—antipodes in character—attracted to each other as if by contradiction. My brother-in-law evidently found a pleasant relaxation in the conversation of his neighbor, embellished with elegant wit and varied learning, while the latter derived equal gratification from the serious, solid, manly intellect of his friend. In

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he had been for the benefit of his health. He graduated at Yale in 1800, with high honors, delivering a poem on the occasion. As a lawyer, he always thought the cause of his client just, and with that feeling, he generally succeeded in cases before a jury. He seems to have had a sort of somnambule habit, and when an interesting case was on his mind, or he was preparing for it, he would go through with his argument in his sleep, addressing the court and jury, with much the same method he usually adopted in the actual trial.

general the former was the talker, and the latter the listener ; yet sometimes the conversation became discussion, and a keen trial of wit, versus logic, ensued. The lawyer always contended for victory, my brother-in-law for the truth : the one was influenced, no doubt, by the easy practices of his profession ; the other by the stern habit of his conscience and character.

The precise form of these conversations has vanished from my mind, but some of the topics remain. I recollect long talks about the embargo, non-intercourse, and other Jeffersonian measures, which were treated with unsparing ridicule and reproach : anecdotes and incidents of Napoleon, who excited mingled admiration and terror, with observations upon public men, as well in Europe as in America. I remember also a very keen discussion upon Berkeley's theory of the idealty of nature, mental and material, which so far excited my curiosity, that finding the "Minute Philosopher," by that author, in the family library, I read it through with great interest and attention. The frequent references to Shakspeare, in these conversations, led me to look into his works, and—incited by the recommendations of my sister—I read them through, somewhat doggedly, seeking even to penetrate the more difficult and obscure passages.

It frequently happened that my master—owing to the influence of disease—was affected with depression of spirits, and the lawyer's best wit and choicest stories were expended without even exciting a smile.

Not discouraged, but rather stimulated by such adversity, he usually went on, and was pretty sure, at last, to strike the vein, as Moses did the water in the rock, and a gush of uncontrollable laughter was the result. I remember in one instance, Mr. Cooke sat for a long time, looking moodily into the fire, while 'Squire Hatch went on telling stories, chiefly about clergymen, of which he had a great assortment. I will endeavor to give you a sketch of the scene.

"I know not why it is so," said the lawyer, "but the fact is undeniable, that the most amusing anecdotes are about clergymen. The reason perhaps is, that incongruity is the source of humorous associations, and this is evidently the most frequent and striking in a profession which sets apart its members as above the mass of mankind, in a certain gravity of character and demeanor, of which the black coat is the emblem. A spot upon this strikes every eye, while a brown coat, being the color of dirt, hides rather than reveals what is upon its surface. Thus it is, as we all know, that what would be insipid as coming from a layman, is very laughable if it happens to a parson. I have heard that on a certain occasion, as the Rev. J . . . M . . . was about to read a hymn, he saw a little boy sitting behind the chorister in the gallery, who had intensely red hair. The day was cold, and the little rogue was pretending to warm his hands by holding them close to the chorister's head. This so disconcerted the minister, that

it was some minutes before he could go on with the services.

The only effect of this was, that my master drew down one corner of his mouth.

"I have heard of another clergyman," said the lawyer, "who suffered in a similar way. One day, in the very midst of his sermon, he saw Deacon B . . . fast asleep, his head leaning back on the rail of the pew, and his mouth wide open. A young fellow in the gallery above, directly over him, took a quid of tobacco from his mouth, and taking a careful aim, let it drop plump into the deacon's mouth. The latter started from his sleep, and went through a terrible paroxysm of fright and choking before he recovered."

Mr. Cooke bit his lip, but was silent. Lawyer Hatch—although he pretended to be all the while looking into the fire—got a quick side glance at the face of his auditor, and continued—

"You know the Rev. Dr. B . . . of B., sir? Well, one day he told me that as he was on his way to New Haven, he came to the house of one of his former parishioners, who, some years before, had removed to that place. As he was about to pass it, he remembered that this person had died recently, and he thought it meet and proper to stop and condole with the widow. She met him very cheerfully, and they had some pleasant chat together.

"*'Madam,'* said he, after a time, *'it is a painful*

subject—but you have recently met with a severe loss.’

“She instantly applied her apron to her eyes, and said—

“‘Oh yes, doctor ; there’s no telling how I feel.’

“‘It is indeed a great bereavement you have suffered.’

“‘Yes, doctor ; very great indeed.’

“‘I hope you bear it with submission?’

“‘I try tu ; but oh, doctor, I sometimes feel in my heart — Goosy, goosy gander, where shall I wander !’”

The lawyer glanced at the object of his attack, and seeming to see a small breach in the wall, he thought it time to bring up his heavy guns. He went on :

“There’s another story about this same Dr. B . . . . which is amusing. Some years ago he lost his wife, and after a time he began to look out for another. At last he fixed his mind upon a respectable lady in a neighboring town, and commenced paying her his addresses. This naturally absorbed much of his time and attention, and his parish became dissatisfied. The deacons of the church held several conferences on the subject, and it was finally agreed that Deacon Becket, who had the grace of smooth speech, should give the reverend doctor a hint of what they deemed his fearful backsliding. Accordingly, the next Sabbath morning, on going to church, the deacon overtook the parson, and the following dialogue ensued :

“‘Good morning, Dr. B . . .’

“‘Good morning,’ Deacon Becket.

“‘Well, doctor, I’m glad to meet you; for I wanted to say to you, as how I thought of changing my pew!’

“‘Indeed! And why so?’

“‘Well, I’ll tell you. I sit, as you know, clear over the back-side of the meeting-house; and between me and the pulpit, there’s Judy Vickar, Molly Warren, Experience Pettybone, and half-a-dozen old maids, who sit with their mouths wide open, and they catch all the best of your sarmon, and when it gets to me, it’s plaguey poor stuff!’”

My brother-in-law could hold out no longer: his face was agitated for a moment with nervous spasms, and then bending forward, he burst into a round, hearty laugh. The lawyer—who made it a point never to smile at his own jokes—still had a look upon his face as much as to say—“Well, sir, I thought I should get my case.”

It may be easily imagined that I was greatly interested by these conversations and discussions, and always felt not a little annoyed, if perchance, as sometimes happened, I was called away in the midst of a good story or a keen debate, to supply a customer with a gallon of molasses, or a paper of pins. I know not if this gave me a disgust of my trade, but it is very certain that I conceived for it a great dislike, nearly from the beginning. Never, so far as I can

recollect, did I for one moment enter heartily into its spirit. I was always, while I continued in it, a mere servile laborer, doing my duty, perhaps, yet with a languid and reluctant heart. However, I got through the winter, and when the summer came, Mr. Cooke nearly gave up personal attention to business, in consequence of ill health, and we had a new clerk, H. N. Lockwood, who was older than myself, and took the responsible charge of the establishment. He was an excellent merchant, and to me was a kind and indulgent friend. He afterward settled in Troy, where I am happy to say he is still living, and in the enjoyment of an ample fortune, and an excellent reputation as a father, friend, Christian, and neighbor—the natural fruit of good sense, good temper, and good conduct.

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## LETTER XXII.

*Visit to New Haven—The City—Yale College—My Uncle's House—John Allen—First view of the Ocean—The Court-house—Dr. Dwight—Professor Silliman—Chemistry, Mineralogy, Geology—Anecdote of Colonel Gibbs—Eli Whitney—The Cotton-gin—The Gun-factory.*

MY DEAR C\*\*\*\*\*

In the summer of 1809 I took a short tour with my brother-in-law and my sister, for the health of the former. This to me was a grand expedition, for among other places we visited was New Haven, then a sort of Jerusalem in my imagination—a holy place,



containing Yale College, of which Dr. Dwight was president. Besides all this, one of my uncles and some of my cousins lived there, and better still, my brother was there, and then a member of the college. Ah, how my heart beat when we set out! Such was the vividness of my perceptions, that I could fill a book with recollections of that short, simple journey—the whole circuit not exceeding one hundred and twenty miles. But, my dear C . . . , be not alarmed! I shall not inflict them upon you: a few brief notes will be the entire burden you shall bear, on this occasion.

I pass over the journey to New Haven, and permit you at once to enter the city. I was of course duly impressed with its beauty, for then, as now, it was celebrated for a rare union of rural freshness and city elegance. I have recently, in passing through it, had a transient view of its appearance, and may safely affirm that after pretty large observation in the Old World, as well as in the New, I know of no town or city more inviting; especially to one whose judgment is cultivated by observation and study, and whose feelings are chastened by reflection and experience. There is a taste of the university in the long shady streets, fit for the walks of Plato, and a metropolitan air in the public buildings and squares, suggestive of ideas of the Forum. There is something of the activity and bustle of commerce in a part of the town, and at one point, all the spasm of a railway station. In other portions of the place, and over

three-fourths of its area, there is the quietude and repose proper to a seat of learning. Here the houses seem suited to the city, each with a garden, breathing the perfumes of the country.

At the period of the visit I am describing, New Haven had not one half its present population, and many of the institutions which now adorn it did not exist. The college, however, was then, as now, a leading literary institution in the country. To me it was an object of special reverence, as my grandfather and his five sons had all been graduated there. My brother and two of my cousins were at this time among its inmates. Of course I looked with intense curiosity at the several buildings that belonged to it. The splendid mineralogical cabinet, now the first in the United States, was not there; nay, the science of mineralogy hardly existed at that time. The Trumbull Gallery of Paintings, comprising many of the best productions of that distinguished painter, and enriched by nearly two hundred portraits of celebrated men, has since been added. Nevertheless, many things here excited my admiration. I looked with particular interest—I may add with some degree of envy—at the students, who seemed to me the privileged sons of the earth. Several were pointed out as promising to be the master-spirits of their age and generation; in some cases I have since seen these anticipations fulfilled.

Next to the college I visited the bay, and for the

first time actually stood upon the shore of that living sea, which through my whole childhood had spread its blue bosom before me, in the distant horizon. A party of three or four of us took a boat, and went down toward the entrance of the bay, landing on the eastern side. From this point the view was enchanting—it being a soft summer afternoon, and the sea only breathed upon by light puffs of wind that came from the west. I looked long, and with a species of entrancement, at its heaving and swelling surface: I ran my eye far away, till it met the line where sky and wave are blent together: I followed the lulling surf as it broke, curling and winding, among the mimic bays of the rocky shore. I looked down into the depths of the water, and perceived the finny inhabitants, gliding through the dim recesses, half sheltered in their tranquil domain by groves of sea-weed, or the shadows of the deepening waters. It was a spectacle not only full of beauty in itself, but to me it was a revelation and a fulfillment of the thousand half-formed fancies, which had been struggling in my longing bosom from very childhood.

Our party was so occupied with our contemplations, that we had scarcely noticed a thunder-storm, which now approached and menaced us from the west. We set out to return, but before we had got half across the bay, it broke full upon us. The change in the aspect of the sea was fearful: all its gentleness was gone, and now, black and scowling,

it seemed, as if agitated by a demon, threatening every thing with destruction that came within its scope. By a severe struggle, we succeeded in reaching Long Wharf, though not without risk. The general impression of the whole scene upon my mind, may be gathered from the following lines, though you must not consider me as the literal hero of the story, nor must you regard this description as a veritable account of the day's adventure :

I stood

Upon a rock that wall'd the Deep :  
Before me roll'd the boundless flood—  
A Glorious Dreamer in its sleep !  
'Twas summer morn, and bright as heaven ;  
And though I wept, I was not sad,  
For tears, thou knowest, are often given  
When the o'erflowing heart is glad.  
Long, long I watch'd the waves, whose whirls  
Leap'd up the rocks, their brows to kiss,  
And dallied with the sea-weed curls  
That stoop'd and wooed the proffer'd bliss.  
Long, long I listen'd to the peal  
That whisper'd from the pebbly shore,  
And like a spirit seem'd to steal  
In music to my bosom's core.  
And now I look'd afar, and thought  
The Sea a glad and glorious thing ;  
And fancy to my bosom brought  
Wild dreams upon her wizard wing—  
Her wing that stretch'd o'er spreading waves,  
And chased the far-off flashing ray,  
Or hovering deep in twilight caves  
Caught the lone mermaid at her play.

And thus the sunny day went by,  
And night came brooding o'er the seas;  
A thick cloud swathed the distant sky,  
And hollow murmurs fill'd the breeze.  
The white-gull, screaming, left the rock,  
And seaward bent her glancing wing,  
While heavy waves, with measured shock,  
Made the dun cliff with echoes ring.  
How changed the scene! The glassy deep,  
That slumber'd in its resting-place,  
And, seeming in its morning sleep  
To woo me to its soft embrace—  
Now waken'd, was a fearful thing—  
A giant with a scowling form,  
Who from his bosom seem'd to fling  
The blacken'd billows to the storm!  
The wailing winds in terror gush'd  
From the swart sky, and seem'd to lash  
The foaming waves, which madly rush'd  
Toward the tall cliff with headlong dash.  
Upward the glittering spray was sent,  
Backward the growling surges whirl'd,  
And splinter'd rocks by lightnings rent,  
Down thundering midst the waves were hurl'd.  
I trembled, yet I would not fly;  
I fear'd, yet loved, the awful scene;  
And gazing on the sea and sky,  
Spell-bound I stood the rocks between.

'Twas strange that I—a mountain-boy—  
A lover of green fields and flowers—  
One who with laughing rills could toy,  
And hold companionship for hours  
With leaves that whisper'd low at night,  
Or fountains bubbling from their springs—

Or summer winds, whose downy flight  
Seem'd but the sweep of angel wings:  
'Twas strange that I should love the clash  
Of ocean in its maddest hour,  
And joy to see the billows dash  
O'er the rent cliff with fearful power.  
'Twas strange—but I was nature's own,  
Uncheck'd, untutor'd; in my soul  
A harp was set, that gave its tone  
To every touch without control.  
The zephyr stirr'd, in childhood warm,  
Thoughts like itself, as soft and blest;  
And the swift fingers of the storm,  
Woke its own echo in my breast.  
Aye, and the strings that else had lain  
Untouch'd, and to myself unknown,  
Within my heart, gave back the strain,  
That o'er the sea and rock was thrown.

These lines were written many years after the events I have been describing, yet the feelings and fancies they portray were suggested, at least in part, by this my first visit to the sea, and my first adventure upon its capricious bosom. I have since crossed the Atlantic sixteen times, and am therefore familiar with all the aspects of the ocean—but never have they impressed me so deeply and so vividly as upon this occasion.

The next object that attracted my attention was the Court-house. Here, for the first time, I saw a "Court"—its awful judges, holding the issues of life and death, and sitting high and apart upon the

"Bench;" here also were twelve hard-looking men, exercising the high functions of that glorious Saxon institution, called a "Jury." Here also was that terrible man—the "sheriff," and a poor wretch in a pen—the "prisoner at the bar." The trial had already begun, and a lawyer, with a powdered head, was telling the court—the jury and the judges—what a desperate scoundrel he was. He proved him to be a burglar of the very worst description. I felt my heart burn with indignation that such a monster should ever have been at large among society. Pretty soon another lawyer got up, and made it as clear as light, that the man was entirely innocent. My feelings were now totally changed, and I felt as if he were a most deserving and most injured person. The jury at last went out, and after an anxious half hour, returned with a verdict of "guilty." The court then sentenced the culprit to "Simsbury Mines"\* for five years.

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\* The place called *Simsbury Mines*, or *Newgate Prison*, sixteen miles northwest of Hartford, is actually within the limits of the town of Granby, the latter having been set off from Simsbury in 1786. The mines consist of deep excavations made in the rocks, for copper ore, by an English company, about 1760. The speculation ended in disaster, and the eaverns began to be used for a prison about the time of the Revolutionary war. In 1790, by a legislative act, it was established as a permanent state-prison under the name of *Newgate*—suitable buildings being erected over the eaverns for the purpose. I visited the place about the year 1811 or 1812. The prisoners were heavily ironed with handcuffs and fetters. In some cases several were fastened together by chains attached to a bar of iron. Most of them worked in a smithy, where each man was chained to his forge or bench. Sentinels, with loaded muskets, stood ready to fire in case of revolt.

The object of the prison was not only to shut up felons, and thus to protect society, but to create an idea of horror in the public mind, and



I had been three hours in the court-room, and my interest had been wound up to the highest pitch. When I left it, my head was in a whirl; my feelings also were painfully excited. I had deemed that a Court of Justice was holy ground; that judges were saints, and jurors grave men, deeply impressed with the duty of a religious fulfillment of their high functions. I had imagined lawyers to be profoundly skilled in the art of discerning and developing the

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thus by a moral influence to prevent crime. The abandoned copper mines were the sleeping place of the criminals. The descent to these infernal regions was by a trap-door, leading down a ladder sixty or seventy feet, through one of the shafts. At the bottom was a considerable space, with short galleries leading in various directions. Here were wooden berths, filled with straw. The prisoners descended the perpendicular ladder in their irons, and thus slept at night. They rose at four in the morning, and went to their rest at four in the afternoon. Their food was principally salt pork, salt beef, and beans. The caverns were ventilated by a large shaft, descending into a well, near the center of the excavations. Strange to say, the health of the prisoners was generally excellent.

As if these gloomy regions did not inspire sufficient terror, it appears that the neighborhood, according to popular ideas, was for a long time peopled with beings from the other world. At one period certain persons seemed to be bewitched, hearing singular noises, and seeing spirits in the air. More recently, the crying of a child and other strange sounds were heard in an uninhabited house. Several persons came here to investigate the subject, and upon hearing the noises, suddenly entered the place, but found nothing. Two young men one night slept in the house, and about midnight, heard something rush in at the window, like a gust of wind, upsetting the chairs, shovel and tongs, and then pass down the ash-hole. What could it have been but Old Sooty himself?

It is not astonishing that the very name of *Simsbury Mines* did, in fact, inspire ideas of peculiar horror. When I was a boy, it was regarded as next door to that place which it is not polite to name. Malefactors, it is said, were very shy of practicing their profession in Connecticut, for fear of getting into this dreadful place. However, after a time, a total change of ideas spread over the community, in regard to prisons: it was

truth. I had indulged a fancy that justice and judgment would here reign in every heart, appear in every face, and guide every tongue. How different seemed the reality! The general impression on my mind was a horror of the place, and all the proceedings: it appeared to me that lawyers, judges, jury, sheriff, and all, were a set of the most heartless creatures I had ever seen—pretending to seek justice, and yet without a single sentiment of humanity. Even decency seemed to be outraged, in the treatment of witnesses, and in jibes cast at the poor prisoner, who, however guilty, rather invited sympathy than ridicule. I must confess that I have never got entirely over this my first impression: the atmosphere of a court-room is to me always depressing—though, I am aware, that the manners here have undergone a great and favorable revolution in modern times.

On Sunday I went to the college chapel, and heard Dr. Dwight preach. He was then at the zenith of his fame—a popular poet, an eloquent divine, a learned author, and, crowning all, president of the college.

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discovered that vindictive punishment was alike wrong in principle and effect; that, in fact, it hardened the sinner, while it should always be the object of punishment, in restraining the felon for the benefit of society, to exercise a moral influence for his reformation. This idea must be classed among the larger humanities which have enlightened and ennobled the public spirit of modern times.

Some thirty years ago, in conformity with these views, Simsbury Mines ceased to be a State Prison, and an excellent institution for that object was established in the beautiful town of Wethersfield. Soon after this period, Simsbury Mines were again wrought for copper, and I believe with success.

He was unquestionably, at that time, the most conspicuous man in New England, filling a larger space in the public eye, and exerting a greater influence than any other individual. No man, since his time, has held an equal ascendancy, during his day and generation, in New England—except perhaps Daniel Webster. In allusion to his authority in matters ecclesiastical as well as civil—for he was a statesman, and exercised his influence in politics, not obtrusively, but by his counsel—he was familiarly called by political adversaries, *Old Pope Dwight*.

In person he was about six feet in height, and of a full, round, manly form. His head was modeled rather for beauty than craniological display. Indeed, phrenology had not then been discovered, and accordingly great men were born without paying the slightest attention to its doctrines. Dr. Dwight had, in fact, no bumps: I have never seen a smoother, rounder pate than his, which, being slightly bald and close shorn, was easily examined. He had, however, a noble aspect—a full forehead and piercing black eyes, though partly covered up with large spectacles in a tortoise-shell frame—for he had been long afflicted with a morbid sensibility of the organs of sight. On the whole, his presence was singularly commanding, enforced by a manner somewhat authoritative and emphatic. This might have been offensive, had not his character and position prepared all around to tolerate, perhaps to admire it. His voice was one of

the finest I ever have heard from the pulpit—clear, hearty, sympathetic—and entering into the soul like the middle notes of an organ. The subject of his discourse I do not recollect; trained, however, as I had been from childhood, to regard him as second only to St. Paul—I discovered in it full justification of his great fame.\*

The house of my uncle, Elizur Goodrich, where

\* The life of Timothy Dwight is full of interesting materials for the biographer. His family connections, his precocity, his development, his performances, his heart, his mind, the details of his career—all abound in those striking lights and shades, which rivet the attention.

His father was a merchant of Northampton, his mother daughter of Jonathan Edwards—the most renowned metaphysician America has produced. He was born May 14, 1752. He learned the alphabet of his mother at one lesson: at six he read Latin; at eight was fitted for college; at thirteen he entered Yale; at nineteen he began his great poem of the Conquest of Canaan, and finished it in three years, though it was not published till 1785. He taught rhetoric, mathematics, and oratory in the college for six years. After this he returned to Northampton, and in 1777, married Miss Woolsey, sister of Wm. W. Woolsey, for many years a distinguished merchant in New Haven. The same year he was licensed to preach, and became chaplain in the army, which he joined at West Point. Here he wrote his celebrated song of Columbia. In 1781 he was a member of the State legislature; and in 1783 was settled as minister at Greenfield. His meeting-house was visible to the naked eye from the windows of our house at Ridgefield. In this village he wrote his fine poem of Greenfield Hill, which appeared in 1794. The next year he succeeded Dr. Stiles as President of Yale College, a post which he filled till his death, Jan. 11, 1817, at the age of 64.

Dr. Dwight's works are numerous and valuable: besides poems, essays, &c., he wrote several volumes of Travels, descriptive of scenes and places in New England, which he had visited during college vacations. His greatest work is *Theology Explained and Defended*. This has been extensively published here and in England, and is greatly admired for its argument, its eloquence, and its happy manner as well of statement as of illustration.

The following memoranda, respecting this great man, have been mostly furnished me by his nephew, Mr. Theodore Dwight, now of New York (1856).

we stayed, was then rather the focal point of society in the city—partly because of his official position and genial manners, and partly, also, on account of the character of his wife, who, to say the least, in a happy union of the highest womanly qualities, was inferior to few ladies of her time. Every evening there was here a levee of accidental visitors, consisting of

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The Dwight family in this country is descended from John Dwight, who came from England in 1637, and settled at Dedham, in Massachusetts. The grandfather of Dr. Dwight built Fort Dunmur, the first settlement within the bounds of Vermont, about 1723-4. Here the father of Dr. Dwight was born. He was a man of immense strength and stature. During the Revolutionary war he went to New Orleans and up the Mississippi, where he purchased land, intending to remove there with his large family. The tract extended some miles along the bank, and included the site of the present city of Natchez; but he soon after died of a fever. A son who accompanied him was lost at sea, and the evidence of his title to the land was never found.

The news of the death of the father of the family was about a year in reaching them. It was a summer day, and one of the elder sons was making hay in a field, when one of the smallest children, who had been present at its announcement, came tottering through the grass, with the sad story. The youth threw his pitchfork into the air, and exclaimed, "Then we're all ruined!" and such was the force of his emotions, that his mind never recovered from the effects to the day of his death.

Timothy, the eldest son, was absent with the army. He now (1778) went to reside in Northampton, with his mother, and assumed the management of the affairs of the family. He carried on their two farms, and at the same time conducted a school, and preached in the adjacent towns. A number of young ladies and gentlemen from different parts of the country, were among his pupils. He had two ushers—one of whom was Joel Barlow. Gen. Zechariah Huntington and Judge Hosmer were his pupils; and a number of young men went to him from Yale College, after the capture of New Haven. He was at that time very acceptable as a preacher, often filling the pulpit where his grandfather, Jonathan Edwards, had officiated. He not only directed the business of the farms, but often worked in the field with the men, his brother Theodore being at his side. The latter, from whom these facts are derived, mentioned that the hired men used to contest for the privilege of mowing next to Timothy, "*that they might hear him talk*"—fluent, interesting, and in-

the distinguished men of the city, and often including other celebrities. Among the noted individuals I saw there, was John Allen, brother of Mrs. Goodrich—a man of eminent talents and most imposing person, being six feet six inches high, with a corresponding power of expression in his form and face. He had been a member of Congress, and is recorded in its

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structive conversation being at that time, as through life, one of his characteristics.

The family comprised thirteen children, nearly all of whom were now at home. The house was in King-street, and next to it, on the east, was that which had been the residence of Jonathan Edwards during his ministry. There David Brainard had died, nursed in his last sickness by one of the daughters of Mr. E., to whom he was engaged. In the burying-ground was the grave of Brainard, which was then, and long after, annually visited by some of his Indian converts, who used to make long journeys through the wilderness to sit a few hours in silent meditation and mourning, over his ashes.

Timothy Dwight had been trained from his earliest years among the simple but refined society of Northampton, and was familiarized with the history of the French and Indian wars, which had been the sources of so much suffering to the friends and ancestors of those around him. The impressions which he received from such scenes and examples, were permanent on his character and life. He entered the American revolutionary army as a chaplain to General Putnam's regiment, with the ardor of a youthful Christian patriot; preached with energy to the troops in camp, sometimes with a pile of the regiment's drums before him, instead of a desk. One of his sermons, intended to raise the drooping courage of the country, when Burgoyne had come down from Canada with his army, and was carrying all before him—was published, and a copy read to the garrison in Fort Stanwix, on the Mohawk river, when Sir John Johnson had cut off their communications with Albany, and threatened their destruction. The venerable Colonel Platt, many years after, affirmed that it was owing to this sermon, that the garrison resolved to hold out to the last extremity, and made the sally in which they routed and drove off their besiegers, delivering Albany from imminent danger, and contributing materially to the defeat of the British in their campaign of 1777.

Many of the personal traits of Dr. Dwight were interesting. He wrote like copperplate: such was the rapid flow of his ideas that he could employ at the same time two amanuenses, by dictating to them on totally



annals by the title of "Long John." He was in person, as well as mind, a sort of Anakim among the members of the House.\*

Here also I saw Dr. Dwight, who was perhaps even more distinguished in conversation than in the pulpit. He was indeed regarded as without a rival in this respect: his knowledge was extensive and various, and his language eloquent, rich, and flowing. His fine voice and noble person gave great effect to what he said. When he spoke, others were silent. This arose in part from the superiority of his powers, but in part also from his manner, which, as I have said, was somewhat authoritative. Thus he engrossed, not rudely, but with the willing assent of those around him, the lead in conversation. Nevertheless, I must remark, that in society the imposing grandeur of

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different subjects. He labored daily in the garden, or in some other way, holding it to be the duty of every man to labor, bodily, so as to insure the perfection of life and enjoyment. He advised professional men, in traveling, and on other occasions, to enter into easy and kindly conversation with strangers, as a means of gaining knowledge, and cultivating a kindly feeling in society. He constantly taught the duty of courtesy and politeness; he loved his country and our free institutions, and inculcated the duty of a constant endeavor to elevate and ennoble the public sentiment. He despised all meanness, and especially that demagogism, which, under a pretense of patriotism, is seeking only for self-promotion, and which is even willing to degrade the people, in order to gratify personal ambition. It is impossible to measure the good done by such a man by his personal example, by his influence upon the students under his care for twenty years, and by the impress of his noble character upon the important institution which was the theater of his labors.

\* Hon. John Allen was a native of Great Barrington: he settled in Litchfield in 1785, and died in 1812. He was not only a member of Congress, but also of the State Council for several years. His son, John W. Allen, of Cleveland, has been a member of Congress.



his personal appearance in the pulpit, was softened by a general blandness of expression and a sedulous courtesy of manner, which were always conciliating, and sometimes really captivating. His smile was irresistible.

In reflecting upon this good and great man, and reading his works in after-time, I am still impressed with his general superiority—his manly intellect, his vast range of knowledge, and his large heart ;—yet, I am persuaded that, on account of his noble person—the perfection of the visible man—he exercised a power in his day and generation, somewhat beyond the natural scope of his mental endowments. Those who read his works only, can not fully realize the impression which he made upon the age in which he lived. His name is still honored : many of his works still live. His *Body of Divinity* takes the precedence, not only here, but in England, over all works of the same kind and the same doctrine ; but at the period to which I refer, he was regarded with a species of idolatry by those around him. Even the pupils of the college under his presidential charge—those who are not usually inclined to hero-worship—almost adored him. To this day, those who had the good fortune to receive their education under his auspices, look back upon it as a great era in their lives.

There was indeed reason for this. With all his greatness in other respects, Dr. Dwight seems to have been more particularly felicitous as the teacher, the

counsellor, the guide, of educated young men. In the lecture-room all his high and noble qualities seemed to find their full scope. He did not here confine himself to merely scientific instruction: he gave lessons in morals and manners, and taught, with a wisdom which experience and common sense only could have furnished, the various ways to insure success in life. He gave lectures upon health—the art of maintaining a vigorous constitution, with the earnest pursuit of professional duties—citing his own example, which consisted in laboring every day in the garden, when the season permitted, and at other times at some mechanical employment. He recommended that in intercourse with mankind, his pupils should always converse with each individual upon that subject in which he was most instructed, observing that he never met a man of whom he could not learn something. He gave counsel, suited to the various professions; to those who were to become clergymen, he imparted the wisdom which he had gathered by a life of long and active experience: he counseled those who were to become lawyers, physicians, merchants—and all with a fullness of knowledge and a felicity of illustration and application, as if he had actually spent a life in each of these vocations. And more than this: he sought to infuse into the bosom of all, that high principle which served to inspire his own soul—that is, to be always a gentleman, taking St. Paul as his model. He considered

not courtesy only, but truth, honor, manliness in all things, as essential to this character. Every kind of meanness he despised. Love of country was the constant theme of his eulogy. Religion was the soul of his system. God was the center of gravity, and man should make the moral law as inflexible as the law of nature. Seeking to elevate all to this sphere, he still made its orbit full of light—the light of love, and honor, and patriotism, and literature, and ambition—all verging toward that fullness of glory, which earth only reflects and heaven only can unfold.

Was not this greatness?—not the greatness of genius, for after all Dr. Dwight was only a man of large common sense and a large heart, inspired by high moral principles. He was, in fact, a Yankee, Christian gentleman—nothing more—nothing less. Where could such character—with such lights and shades—be produced, except here in our stern, yet kindly climate of New England? Can you find such a biography as this in France? in Germany? in Old England, even? You may find men of genius, but hardly of that Puritan type, so well illustrated in the life and character of Timothy Dwight. Shake not your head, then, my dear C . . . , and say that nothing good can come of this, our cold, northern Nazareth!

Another man, whom I now saw for the first time, was Professor Silliman, then beginning to fill a large space in the public eye. He had recently returned from a visit to Europe, but did not publish his "Jour

nal of Travels" till the next year. It was a great thing then to go to Europe, and get back safe. It was a great thing then to look upon a person who had achieved such an enterprise, and especially a man like the professor, who had held communication with the learned and famous people on the other side of the Atlantic. But this was not all : Professor Silliman had begun to popularize the discoveries of the new science of Chemistry. What wonders were thus disclosed to the astonished people ! By means of blow-pipes, flasks, and crucibles, all nature seemed to be transformed as by the spells of a sorcerer. The four old-fashioned elements were changed—proved, in short, to be impostors, having been passed off from time immemorial as solid, substantial, honest elements, while they were in fact, each and all, only a parcel of compounds ! *Fire* was no longer fire ; it was only an incident of combustion : heat was a sensation, and at the bottom of the whole matter was a thing called caloric. *Earth*, that stable, old-fashioned footstool of man and his Maker, was resolved into at least fifty ingredients ; *air* was found to be made up of two gases, called oxygen and nitrogen—one being a sort of good angel, supporting life and combustion, and the other a kind of bad devil, stifling the breath, putting out the candle, and destroying vegetation. As to *water*, that, too, was forced to confess that it had hitherto practiced an imposition upon the world, for instead of being a simple, frank, honest element, it

was composed of oxygen and hydrogen—the latter of such levity as to be fit for little else than inflating balloons!

What a general upsetting of all old-fashioned ideas of creation was this! It is scarcely possible for any one to conceive what a change has taken place, through the influence of chemistry, within the last half century. Every substance in nature has been attacked, and few have preserved their integrity. This science has passed from the laboratory to the workshop, the manufactory, the farm, the garden, the kitchen. Everybody is now familiar with its discoveries, its principles, its uses. Chemistry, which was a black art when I was a boy, is in the school-books now; and Professor Silliman was the great magician that brought about this revolution in our country. He had just commenced his incantations, and already the world began to echo with their wonders. With what engrossing admiration did I look at him, when he came into the room, and I heard his name announced!

At this time, his lectures were not only attended by the youth of the college, but by a few privileged ladies and gentlemen from the world without. I went with one of my cousins, entertaining the common idea that chemistry was much the same as alchemy—an art whose chief laboratory was in the infernal regions. I had read something about the diableries of Friar Bacon, seeking by compact with the Great

Blacksmith below, to discover the philosopher's stone, but hitting by accident upon gunpowder; and this formed my general notion of the science. When I entered the lecture-room, and saw around, a furnace, an anvil, a sink, crucibles, flasks, retorts, receivers, spatulas, a heap of charcoal, a bed of sand, with thermometers, pyrometers, barometers, hydrometers, and an array of other ometers, with a variety of odd-looking instruments—the use of which I could not imagine—I began to feel a strange sort of bewilderment. This was turned to anxiety, when I perceived in the air an odor that I had never experienced before, and which seemed to me to breathe of that pit which is nameless as well as bottomless. I asked one of the pupils who sat near me about it, and he said it was *sulphureted hydrogen*, whereupon I became composed; not that I knew any better what it was, but as they had a name for it, I supposed it was of earth and not of the other place.

At last the lecturer began. I was immediately attracted by his bland manner and beautiful speech. All my horrors passed instantly away, and in a few moments I was deep in the labyrinths of alkalies, acids, oxygen, hydrogen, nitrogen, &c. I learned how sulphur with an *ic* meant one thing, with an *ous*, another, with an *et*, another, and so on. Finally, the professor got beyond my reach, and I was completely lost in a maze of words, too deep for my comprehension. But now the theory was done, and the experi-

ments began. The lights were put out. A piece of wire was coiled in a glass jar, filled with oxygen. A light was applied—and fizz—fizz—fizz, went the wire, actually burning like a witch-quill! That was chemistry, brought down to the meanest capacity. We all clapped hands, as they do now at Niblo's. After this, one or two of the pupils took exhilarating gas, and thereupon seemed to enjoy the most delicious trances. Still other experiments followed, and everybody was convinced that the new science was not a thing to be feared, as smelling of necromancy, but that in fact it was an honest science, fit to be introduced even into the domestic arts. Since that time it has actually transformed the whole business of life, producing benefits which no words can adequately describe.

Geology followed close upon the heels of chemistry. This, too, which was confined to the arcana of science in my boyhood, and was even there a novelty, is now a school study. Professor Silliman has been a leader in this also. He had commenced at the period of which I am speaking, but he had only advanced into its precincts—the science of mineralogy. This had begun to be popular in the centers of learning. young collegians went into the mountains with bags and hammers, and came back loaded with queer stones. In fact, hunting specimens took the place of hunting bears, deer, and foxes, and was pursued with all the ardor of the chase. Ladies, turning blue, had pieces



of marble, ore, quartz, and other things o' the kind, on their mantel-pieces, and those who were thoroughly dyed, had little cabinets, all arranged on Haüy's principles of crystallography. Let me tell an anecdote in illustration of the spirit of the age.

About this time Colonel Gibbs, originally from Rhode Island, but who now lived on Long Island, near Flushing, became an enthusiast in the new science. He was in fact the founder of the splendid mineralogical cabinet at present belonging to Yale College. While he was in the very crisis of his fever, he chanced to be traveling in a stage-coach among one of the remote rocky districts of New Hampshire. Coming at last to a region which looked promising of mineralogical discoveries, he stopped at a small, obscure tavern, borrowed a hammer, and went into the mountains. Here he soon became engrossed in his researches, which were speedily rewarded by several interesting specimens. In his enthusiasm, his own exertions were not sufficient, so that he employed several persons to assist him in knocking the rocks to pieces. At the end of a week he had completely exhausted his cash. He then paid the workmen in coats, pantaloons, boots, shoes, and at last in shirts. These finally came to an end, and he paid in promises, in no degree abating his zeal. By this time he had collected three sacks of stones, which it took six men to carry. The people around did not comprehend him, and of course supposed him to be insane. One day, while

he chanced to be in the tavern, an acquaintance of his came along in the stage-coach, and the two eagerly exchanged salutations. The keeper of the hotel, seeing this, took the stranger aside, and said :

“ You seem to be acquainted with this gentleman ? ”

“ Yes ; I know him : it is Colonel Gibbs, of Long Island.”

“ Well, he said his name was Gibbs, but he is as mad as a March hare.”

“ Indeed : what makes you think so ? ”

“ Why he has been here a fortnight knocking all Monadnock to pieces. He has spent all his money, and given away his clothes, till he hasn't a shirt to his back. If you are a friend of his, you ought to make his family acquainted with his situation, so that he may be taken care of.”

“ Oh, I understand. The colonel is not insane : he is a mineralogist.”

“ A what ? ”

“ A mineralogist—a collector of curious stones.”

“ Are they to eat ? ”

“ No ; they are specimens to be preserved for scientific purposes.”

“ Ha, ha ! what quiddles there are in this world ! Every little while, one on 'em comes along here. Last year, a man, called a professor from Cambridge, stopped here a week, ketching all the bugs, beetles, and butterflies he could find. About the same time, another man came, and he went into the mountains.

pulling up all the odd weeds and strange plants he met with. He took away a bundle as big as a haystack; and now this Colonel somebody is making a collection of queer stones! I think the people down your way can't have much to do, else they wouldn't take to such nonsense as this."

I give you this story, not vouching for its precise accuracy, but as characterizing the zeal for modern science, in this its birthday. The truth is, that somewhat more than half a century ago, physical science had almost completely engrossed the leading minds in Europe. Discouraged or disgusted with diving into the depths of metaphysics, the learned world eagerly began to bore into the bowels of the earth: instead of studying mind, they pounded and pondered upon matter. Chemistry, mineralogy, geology, and a whole family of ologies, became the rage. This transatlantic epidemic migrated to America. It was in full vigor among the learned here, at the time I speak of. In the benighted parts of the country, as in the precincts of Monadnock, this mania still appeared to be madness. There was method in it, however. The modern discoveries of chemistry, mineralogy, &c., as already intimated, have wrought a change in human knowledge, astonishing alike for the enlargement of its boundaries, the novelty of its revelations, and the certainty and precision which have taken the place of doubt and conjecture. The hills, the mountains, the valleys, with their founda-

tions—the layers of rocks which have been hidden from the “beginning”—have been examined, and their secrets laid open to the world. Here have been found the traces of kingdoms—vegetable, mineral, and animal—belonging to other creations, such as leaves of perished races of plants, bones of extinct races of animals, rocks built before the flood. These have all become familiar to us, and their inscriptions have disclosed wonders of which mankind had never before dreamed. Thus within the last fifty years, new sciences have been created, and have lavished their wonders upon the astonished world. Champollion discovered the means of interpreting the mystic signs upon the monuments of Egypt; but behold a greater wonder: Cuvier and his followers have enabled us to read the lines written by God upon the rocks which were laid deep in the foundations of the earth, millions of ages ago!

When Dr. Webster came to revise his Dictionary in 1840, after a lapse of twelve years, he found it necessary to add several thousand words, in order to express the ideas which had recently passed from technological science, into our common language. Similar additions were required, a few years after, in the preparation of another revised edition. Nothing can more strikingly mark the progress of knowledge, not merely in the minds of scholars, but among the masses, during the period to which I refer, than this. There is no half century like the last, in the history

of mankind. Nor is the end yet. The thirst for discovery seems only to have begun.

Indeed, such is the celerity of our progress, that some heads grow giddy. They begin to see double: old men have visions, and young maidens dream dreams. Materialism pervades the air, and the new spiritual world is a mere mesmeric phantasmagoria of this earthy ball, which we inhabit. Spirits, now-a-days, push about tables, rap at the door, tumble over the chairs, learn the alphabet, and spell their names with emphasis. Lusty spirits are they, with vigorous muscles, hard knuckles, and rollicking humors! They will talk, too, and as great nonsense as any alive. If these are the only kind of souls to be met with, in their seven heavens, one would hardly like to go there. Really, these mesmeric spirits seem very much of the ardent kind, and I suspect have more alcohol of the imagination than real immortality about them.

Another remarkable person whom I saw at my uncle's house was Eli Whitney, the inventor of the cotton-gin. He was a large man of rather full habit, slightly round-shouldered, and doubling himself forward as he sat. His face was large and slightly oval; his nose long and hooked; his eye deep-set, black, and keen; his look penetrating and prolonged. His hair was black, though sprinkled with gray, for he was now some five and forty years old; his skin was smooth, sallow, and pallid. Altogether, his appearance was striking, the expression of his face having a deep

thoughtfulness about the brow, tempered by a pleasant smile at the corners of the mouth.

In conversation he was slow, but his thoughts were clear and weighty. His knowledge seemed at once exact and diversified: he spoke more of science than literature; he was not discursive, but logically pursued trains of thought, shedding light at every sentence. Few men have lived to more purpose than he. Before his time, cotton was separated from the seed by hand, and hence its price was thirty to fifty cents a pound. He produced a machine, by which a series of hooked, iron teeth, playing through openings in a receiver, performed the labor of five hundred men in a day! An immense facility in the production of cotton has been the result, with a corresponding fall in its price and extension of its use, throughout Christendom.

In 1790,\* cotton was hardly known in this country;

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\* Cotton appears to have been used in India for making cloths as early as 440 B. C., and probably long before that time, yet here the art remained isolated for ages. The Arabians at length brought India cotton to Adula, on the Red Sea, whence it was introduced into Europe. The cotton manufacture was brought there by the Moors of Spain in the ninth century. Raw cotton was first introduced into England from the Levant, chiefly for candlewicks. The cotton manufacture was brought hither by the refugees from the Low Countries in the time of Queen Elizabeth. For a long time, the fabrics produced were coarse; the finer cotton goods—muslins, calicoes, chintzes, being largely supplied from India. In 1730, Mr. Wyatt first began to spin cotton by machinery. In 1742, the first cotton-spinning mill was built at Manchester, the motive-power being mules and horses. The entire value of the cotton manufacture of England in 1760 was a million of dollars: now it is probably two hundred millions of dollars.

In 1790, Mr. Slater put up at Pawtucket, R. I., the first cotton-mill in

in 1800, the whole product of the United States was eighty-five thousand bales; in 1855, it is three millions and a half of bales. Nearly half the nations of the earth, seventy-five years ago, went naked or in rags, or in bark or skins; but they are now clothed in cotton. Then a shirt cost a week's work; now a man earns two shirts in a day. Now, during every twelve hours of daylight, the spindles of the world produce threads of cotton sufficient to belt our globe twenty times round at the equator! And Eli Whitney was the Chief Magician who brought this about.

At the time I speak of, his Gun-factory, two miles north of New Haven, was the great curiosity of the neighborhood. Indeed, people traveled fifty miles to see it. I think it employed about a hundred men. It was symmetrically built in a wild romantic spot, near the foot of East Rock, and had a cheerful, tasteful appearance—like a small tidy village. We visited it of course, and my admiration was excited to the utmost. What a bound did my ideas make in mechanics, from the operations of the penknife, to this miracle of machinery! It was, at the time, wholly

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America. In 1802, the first cotton factory was erected in New Hampshire. In 1804, the first power-loom was introduced at Waltham; in 1822, the first cotton factory was built at Lowell. The cotton manufactures of the United States now amount to sixty-five millions of dollars a year!

In 1789, about one million pounds of cotton were produced in the United States; in 1792, Whitney perfected his gin for cleaning cotton; in 1810, the United States produced eighty-five millions pounds of cotton; in 1820, one hundred and sixty millions; in 1830, three hundred and fifty millions; in 1855, probably fourteen hundred millions. The United States are now the chief cotton producers for the world.



engaged in manufacturing muskets for the government. Mr. Whitney was present, and showed us over the place, explaining the various processes. Every part of the weapons was made by machinery, and so systematized that any lock or stock would fit any barrel. All this, which may seem no wonder now, was remarkable at the time, there being no similar establishment in the country. Among other things, we here saw the original model of the Cotton-gin,\* upon which Mr. Whitney's patent was founded.

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\* Eli Whitney was born at Westborough, Mass., in 1765, of parents in the middle ranks of life. He showed an early propensity to mechanics, first making a very good fiddle, and then mending fiddles for the neighborhood. He once got his father's watch, and slyly took it to pieces, but contrived to put it together again, so as not to be detected. At the age of thirteen he made a table-knife to match the set, one of which had been broken. During the Revolutionary war he took to nail-making, nails being very scarce, and made a profitable business of it. He then made long pins for ladies' bonnets, walking-canes, &c. At the age of nineteen he began to think of college, and surmounting various obstacles, entered Yale in 1789, having been fitted in part by Dr. Goodrich, of Durham. In college he displayed great vividness of imagination in his compositions, with striking mechanical talent—mending, on a certain occasion, some philosophical apparatus, greatly to the satisfaction and surprise of the Faculty.

In 1792 he went to Georgia, as teacher in the family of Mr. B.... On his arrival, he found that the place was supplied; happily he fell under the kind care and patronage of Mrs. Greene, widow of Gen. G. Hearing the planters lament that there was no way of separating cotton from the seed but by hand, and that it took a slave a whole day to clean a pound, he set privately to work, and after a time produced his gin, which was to make such a revolution in the world. In this process, he was obliged to make his own wire. On disclosing his discovery, the planters saw at once the vast field of enterprise open to them. Whitney took immediate steps to secure a patent, and made arrangements to manufacture gins, but a series of misfortunes and discouragements defeated him. The history of his career at this period is a melancholy story of efforts baffled, hopes disappointed, and engagements violated, disclosing the most shameful wrongs and outrages on the part of individ-

## LETTER XXIII.

*Durham—History of Connecticut—Distinguished Families of Durham—The Chaunceys, Wadsworths, Lymans, Goodriches, Austins, &c.—Woodbury—How Romance becomes History—Rev. Noah Benedict—Judge Smith.*

MY DEAR C\*\*\*\*\*

Having spent about a week at New Haven, we proceeded to Durham, an old-fashioned, sleepy town of a thousand inhabitants. Its history lies chiefly in the remarkable men it has produced—the Chaun-

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als, and even of courts and legislatures. He instituted sixty suits in Georgia for violations of his rights, and was not able to get a single decision until thirteen years from the commencement! Thus, in fact, the great benefactor of the cotton interest of the South, only derived years of misery and vexation from his invention.

In 1798, through the influence of Oliver Wolcott, Secretary of the Treasury, he obtained a contract for the manufacture of arms for the United States, and then established his factory at Whitneyville. He was eight years in producing ten thousand pieces. At length, however, his measures being completed, his establishment was one of the most perfect in the world, and the arms he provided were probably the best then made in any country.

In 1822, he applied for a renewal of his patent for the cotton-gin. It was estimated that the value of one hundred millions of dollars had then been added to the lands of the South by this invention, while he had reaped only sorrow and embarrassment; yet he failed, most of the southern members of Congress opposing his request!

In 1817, he married a daughter of the celebrated Pierpont Edwards, Judge of the District Court for the State of Connecticut. In 1822, he was attacked with disease, which terminated his career in 1825. His character, like his life, was remarkable: though a refined scholar, he was a skillful mechanic—no man in his shop being able to handle tools more dexterously than himself: though possessing a fine imagination, and a keen inventive faculty, he had a perseverance in pursuing his plans to completion, that nothing could arrest. He was at once energetic and systematic; dignified, yet courteous; large in his views, yet

ceys,\* celebrated in the literary, clerical, official, and professional annals of New England, and I may add, of the country at large; the Wadsworths, no less noted in various commanding stations, military and civil, public and private; the Lymans, renowned in the battle-field, the college, the pulpit, and the senate; the Austins—father and son—to whose talent and enterprise Texas owes her position as a member of this Union.

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precise in detail; a profound thinker, and scrutinizing nature and its phenomena with amazing depth of thought, yet coming at last with the docility of a child to the Christian's confession—"I am a sinner, may God have mercy upon me!"

\* Whoever would understand the true history of Connecticut, should not confine his reading to general works on this subject, but should look into the local histories and genealogical memoranda of towns and villages, of which there are now a great number. A good collection may be found in the Library of the Hartford Atheneum. If any one desires to know the annals of Durham, let him read the sermon delivered by Professor W. C. Fowler at that place, Dec. 29, 1847, and printed at Amherst, Mass., 1848. The notes will prove a revelation, not of history only, but of something like romance. The number of great men proceeding from this small town, in times past, is not only striking but instructive, as it suggests and illustrates the manner in which Connecticut has exerted a powerful influence upon this country—the United States—I might even say upon this continent. Among the families of Durham, noticed by Professor Fowler, are the following:

*The Chaunceys.*—Nathaniel Chauncey, grandson of President Chauncey, of Harvard College, was born at Hatfield, Mass., 1681, was graduated at Yale in 1702—belonging to the first class that graduated in that college, all of whom became ministers. He was ordained at Durham in 1711, and died there 1756. His son, Elihu Chauncey, lived in Durham, and was a man of high character and large influence. His daughter, Catherine, married Dr. Goodrich, who was my grandfather. His son, Charles Chauncey, settled at New Haven, and was a man of extensive learning and great ability. He became attorney-general of the State and judge of the Superior Court. He received the title of LL.D. from the college at Middlebury; and died 1823. Among his children were Charles Chauncey, LL.D., distinguished as an eminent lawyer and re-

To this list of remarkable names, I trust I may add that of the Goodriches, without the imputation of egotism, for historical justice demands it. At the time I visited the place, nearly all the family had long since left it. My grandfather—Dr. Goodrich—died in 1797, but my grandmother was living, as well as her daughter, Mrs. Smith, wife of Rev. David Smith, the clergyman of the place, who had succeeded to my grandfather's pulpit.

I had never any great fancy for genealogies, so I did not study the broad-spreading tree of the family, its roots running back to the time of Godric the Saxon—the great Adam of the race—as is duly set forth

finer gentleman, settled at Philadelphia, and died 1849; Elihu Chauncey, a distinguished merchant of Philadelphia, died 1847. Many others, descendants of the Durham Chaunceys, attained distinction.

*The Wadsworths.*—Among the Durham Wadsworths, were the following: Col. James, from Farmington, born 1675, filled various offices, civil and military, and was much honored and respected in his time. General James Wadsworth, grandson of the preceding, became major-general and member of Congress during the Revolutionary war, died 1817, aged 87. James Wadsworth, nephew of the preceding, born 1763, founded the great Wadsworth estate in western New York, and distinguished himself by his successful labors in behalf of school education: he died 1844. Other members of this branch of the family have reached high and honored celebrity.

*The Lymans.*—Phineas Lyman, born at Durham, 1716, became major-general; gained the victory at Lake George, in the French and Indian war, for Gen. William Johnson (who received five thousand pounds and a baronetcy therefor), and performed various other military exploits. He projected a settlement in the Southwest, and died in West Florida, 1775. The history of his family is full of tragic interest. Other members of the family were distinguished.

*The Goodriches.*—See Fowler's notes, above mentioned; also Hollister's History of Connecticut, vol. ii. pp. 634, etc.

*The Austins.*—For this remarkable family, consult also Fowler's notes.

in King William's Doomsday-Book. Two old bachelors of the place—a little quaint and starch, but studiously polite and very gentleman-like, with a splendid farm, and a house embellished with old oak carvings—told me something about it, and made it out, by a long chain of links, that I was their great, great, double cousin; that is, on my mother's, as well as my father's side. My grandmother also explained to me, that somewhere since the building of Babel, her family was blent with the Griswolds, whence I got my middle name—in token of which she gave me a reverend silver-headed cane, marked I. G., that is, John Griswold, who was her great-grandfather. Of course, I have piously kept this antediluvian relic to the present day.

I trust I have all due respect for this my little, fat, paternal grandmother, and who has already, by the way, been introduced to your notice. She was now quite lame, having broken her leg some years before, and appeared to me shorter than ever; nevertheless, she was active, energetic, and alive to every thing that was passing. She welcomed me heartily, and took the best care of me in the world—lavishing upon me, without stint, all the treasures of her abundant larder. As to her Indian puddings—alas, I shall never see their like again! A comfortable old body she was in all things—and as I have before remarked, took a special interest in the welfare of the generation of descendants rising up around her. When she saw

me eating with a good appetite, her benignant grandmotherly face beamed like a lantern.

She was a model housekeeper, and as such had great administrative talents. Every thing went right in the household, the garden, the home lot, the pasture, and the little farm. The hens laid lots of large fresh eggs, the cows gave abundance of milk, the pigs were fat as butter; the wood-pile was always full. There was never any agony about the house: all was methodical, as if regulated by some law of nature. The tall old clock in the entry, although an octogenarian, was still staunch, and ticked and struck with an emphasis that enforced obedience. When it told seven in the morning, the breakfast came without daring to delay even for a minute. The stroke of twelve brought the sun to the noon-mark, and dinner to the table. The tea came at six. At sunset on Saturday evening, the week's work was done, and according to the Puritan usage, the Sabbath was begun. All suddenly became quiet and holy. Even the knitting-work was laid aside. Meditation was on every brow; the cat in the corner sat with her eyes half shut, as if she too were considering her ways.

On the morning of the Holy Day, all around was silent. The knife and fork were handled quietly, at the table. The toilet, though sedulously performed, was made in secret. People walked as if they had gloves on their shoes. Inanimate nature seemed to know that God rested on that day, and hallowed it.

The birds put on a Sunday air: the cows did not low from hill to hill as on other days. The obstreperous hen deposited her egg, and cackled not. At nine o'clock, the solemn church bell rang, and in the universal stillness, its tones swelled over the village like a voice from above. At ten, the second bell rang, and the congregation gathered in. There, in the place she had held for forty years, was my good grandmother, in rain and shine, in summer and in winter. Though now well stricken in years, and the mother of staunch men—their names honored in the pulpit, the senate, and at the bar—she still faltered not in the strait and narrow path of duty. She was strong-minded, and showed it by a life which elevated, ennobled, and illustrated the character of the mother, the wife, the woman, as she had learned to regard it. It was pleasant to see with what affectionate reverence the people saluted her, as if, in addition to the love they bore her, she still carried with her remembrances of her now almost worshiped husband. Many years she lived after this, but she is now numbered with the dead. Let her portrait have a place in these pages as a fine specimen of the New England wife of the olden time.

As to my uncle and aunt Smith, I may remark that they were plain, pious people, the former worthily filling the pulpit of my grandfather, and enjoying a high degree of respect, alike from his position and character. Besides attending to his parochial duties, he fit-



ted young men for college. Among his pupils were Samuel D. Hubbard, late Postmaster-general of the United States, Dr. Dekay, the naturalist, Commodore Dekay, and other persons who attained distinction. As a man, he was distinguished for his cheerful, frank, friendly manners: as a preacher, he was practical, sincere, and successful. I must mention a story of him, among my pulpit anecdotes. As sometimes happens, in a congregation of farmers during midsummer, it once chanced that a large number of his people fell asleep—and in the very midst of the sermon. Even the deacons in the sacramental seat had gone cosily to the land of Nod. The minister looked around, and just at that moment, the only person who seemed quite awake, was his eldest son, David, sitting in the minister's pew by the side of the pulpit. Pausing a moment and looking down upon his son, he exclaimed, in a powerful voice—

“David, wake up!”

In a moment the whole congregation roused themselves, and long did they remember the rebuke. In after-times, when, through the temptations of the devil and the weakness of the flesh, during sermon-time, their sight became drowsy, and dreams floated softly over their eyelids, then would come to mind the ominous sound, “David, wake up!” and starting from their slumbers, they would shake themselves, and fix their eyes on the preacher, and wrestle with their infirmities like Jacob—sometimes, though not always,

prevailing like Israel. I need only add in respect to this excellent old gentleman, that he is still living, at the age of eighty-nine, and last year (1855) preached at the capitol in Washington to an attentive and gratified audience.

During our stay of two or three weeks at Durham, my brother-in-law was so ill as to need the advice of a skillful physician. Accordingly I was dispatched on horseback to Middletown, a distance of eight or ten miles, for Dr. O . . . ., then famous in all the country round about. On my way I met a man of weather-beaten complexion and threadbare garments, mounted on a lean and jaded mare. Beneath him was a pair of plump saddlebags. He had all the marks of a doctor, for then men of this profession traversed the country on horseback, carrying with them a collection of pills, powders, and elixirs, equivalent to an apothecary's shop. A plain instinct told me that he was my man. As I was about to pass him, I drew in my breath, to ask if he were Dr. O . . . ., but a sudden bashfulness seized me : the propitious moment passed, and I went on.

On arriving at the house of Dr. O . . . ., I learned that he had gone to a village in the southwestern part of the town, six or eight miles off. "There!" said I to myself, "I knew it was he: if I had only spoken to him!" However, reflection was vain. I followed to the designated spot, and there I found that he had left about half an hour before, for another

village in the central part of the town. I gave chase, but he was too quick for me, so that I was obliged to return to Durham without him. "Ah!" I thought, "how much trouble a little courage would have saved me!" In fact, I took the incident to heart, and have often practiced to advantage upon the lesson it suggested, which is, never to let a doctor, or any thing else, slip, for the want of asking an opportune question.

This Dr. O . . . . made several visits to Durham, and I remember to have heard my brother-in-law once ask him whether he was a Brunonian\* or a Cullenite; to which he replied, smartly—"Sir, I am a doctor

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\* About this time, the "spotted fever" appeared along the Connecticut river, and a change in the general character of fevers took place, there being now a tendency to typhoid, instead of inflammatory, symptoms, as had been the case before. These circumstances embarrassed and baffled the profession. In general, however, they followed their proclivities, and either physicked or stimulated, as their doctrines dictated. In point of fact, one practice killed and cured about as well as the other. At all events, the plague raged for some years at certain places and at particular seasons, and thus society was wrought into a state of frenzy upon the two modes of treatment. At a somewhat later date—about 1812—a family that held to brandy, would hardly hold intercourse with another which held to jalap. At Hartford, Doctors Todd and Welles, who stimulated, were looked upon as little better than infidels by those who believed in Dr. Bacon and purgatives. These divisions even caught the hues of political parties, and alcohol became democratic, while depletion was held to be federal. In the end it proved that both systems were right and both wrong—to a certain extent. Experience showed that the true mode of practice was to treat each case according to its symptoms. The fitness of a physician for his profession, was, under these circumstances, manifested by the sagacity with which he found his way out of the woods. Dr. O . . . . was one of those who, at an early stage of the difficulty, *being a doctor himself*, that is, being guided by good sense, and not by slavery, to a system—arrived at the true mode of practice.

myself!" The pith of this answer will be felt, when it is known that at this period, and indeed for some years after, there was a schism in the medical profession of this region, which became divided into two parties; one of them adopting the theory and practice of John Brown,\* that life is a forced state, depending upon stimuli, and hence that disease and death are to be constantly combated by stimulants. According to this theory, even certain fevers were to be treated with brandy, and in extreme cases, with a tincture of Spanish flies—internally administered! The other followed the theory of Cullen, who adopted the opposite practice of purgatives and depletion, more especially in fevers. A real frenzy ensued, and

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\* John Brown was born at Dunse, Scotland, 1735. He studied medicine with Cullen, then the leading man of the profession in Great Britain. After a time he produced his *Elements of Medicine*, in Latin, designed to overthrow the system which Cullen had produced. Its general doctrine, as stated above, was that life is a forced state, only sustained by the action of external agents operating upon the body, every part of which is furnished with a certain amount of excitability. He discarded all drugs, and confined himself to alcohol—wine, brandy, &c.—for one set of diseases, and opium for the opposite set. The simplicity of the doctrine and the ability with which it was set forth, gave it for a time a fatal currency, not only in Europe but in America. The celebrated Dr. Beddoes, among others, adopted and propagated it. The system, however, after a time, fell into disrepute. Brown died in 1788, a victim of intemperance, probably the result of his medical system.

William Cullen was born in Lanarkshire, Scotland, 1712, and having studied medicine, he practiced with credit at Glasgow. In 1756, he became Professor of Chemistry at the University of Edinburgh, where he greatly distinguished himself. In 1763, he succeeded Dr. Alston as Professor of Medicine. As a teacher, his popularity was unbounded. His personal character was distinguished for amiableness and purity: his medical works for a time exercised a powerful influence, and he is still regarded as having greatly advanced the science of medicine, though some of his theories have been modified and others rejected.

the medical profession, as well as society, were involved in a sort of temporary insanity.

At length we departed from Durham, and took our way homeward, through a series of small towns, arriving at last at Woodbury. Here we remained a week or ten days, being hospitably entertained by the Rev. Noah Benedict, my brother-in-law's uncle. He lived in a large, low, old-fashioned house, embowered in elms, and having about it an air of antiquity, comfort, and repose. He was himself very aged, nearly eighty years old, I should judge. He was, like my own lineage, of the orthodox faith, and sometimes officiated in his pulpit, though he had now a colleague. I need not describe him, further than to say that he was a fine old man, greatly beloved by his parish, and almost adored by his immediate connections. Close by, in a sumptuous house, lived his son, Noah B. Benedict, then a leading lawyer of the State. Half a mile to the south, in an antique, gable-roofed mansion, dwelt his daughter, the wife of Nathaniel Smith, one of the judges of the Supreme Court, and regarded as the intellectual giant of his time. I have good reason to remember the place, for it is now the home of one of my sisters, who married, many years later, the only child of its founder—long since gathered to his fathers.

The week of our sojourn at Woodbury flew on golden wings with me. The village itself was after my own heart. It lies in a small tranquil valley, its

western boundary consisting of a succession of gentle acclivities, covered with forests; that on the east is formed of basaltic ledges, broken into wild and picturesque forms, rising sharp and hard against the horizon. Through the valley, in long serpentine sweeps, flows a stream, clear and bright—now dashing and now sauntering; here presenting a rapid and there a glassy pool. In ancient times it was bordered by cities of the beaver; it was now the haunt of a few isolated and persecuted muskrats. In the spring and autumn, the wild-ducks, in their migrations, often stooped to its bosom for a night's lodging. At all seasons it was renowned for its trout. In former ages, when the rivers, protected by the deep forests, ran full to the brim, and when the larger streams were filled to repletion with shad and salmon, this was sometimes visited by enterprising individuals of their race, which shot up cataracts, and leaped over obstructing rocks, roots, and mounds, impelled by an imperious instinct to seek places remote from the sea, where they might deposit in safety the seeds of their future progeny. In those days, I imagine, the accidents and incidents of shad and salmon life, often rivaled the adventurous annals of Marco Polo or Robinson Crusoe.

There was, in good sooth, about this little village, a singular union of refinement and rusticity, of cultivated plain and steeping rock, of blooming meadow and dusky forest. The long, wide street, saving the



highway and a few stray paths, here and there, was a bright, grassy lawn, decorated with abundance of sugar-maples, which appeared to have found their Paradise.\* Such is the shape of the encircling hills and ledges that the site of the village seems a sort of secluded Happy Valley, where every thing turns to poetry and romance. And this aptitude is abundantly encouraged by history—for here was once the favored home of a tribe of Indians. All around—the rivers, the hills, the forests—are still rife with legends and remembrances of the olden time. A rocky mound, rising above the river on one side, and dark forests on the other, bears the name of “Pomperaug’s Castle;” a little to the north, near a bridle-path that traversed the meadows, was a heap of stones, called “Pomperaug’s Grave.” To the east I found a wild ledge, called Bethel Rock.† And each of these objects has

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\* The street of Woodbury continues to that of Southbury, the two united being three miles in length. These are decorated by a double line of sugar-maples—certainly one of the most beautiful exhibitions of the kind I have ever seen.

† Woodbury is alike historical and legendary ground. Its names trace out its story. Quassapaug Lake, Shepaug River, Quanonpaug Falls, Nonnewaug Falls, tell us of its original proprietors: Rattlesnake Rock, and White Deer Hills, bespeak the ancient inhabitants of the forest: Bethel Rock, Carmel Hill, and Tophet Hollow, announce the arrival here of the Pilgrim settlers from New Haven: Hall’s Rock, Good Hill, Lightning’s Playground, Seuppo, Hazel Plain, Moose Horn Hill, Ash Swamp, all in Woodbury or the vicinity, indicate alike certain traits of scenery, with the final settlement of the country by the English. The remarkable men that have originated in this town within the last century, present a marvellous record of ability, patriotism, and piety. My imagination was greatly excited by the legends I heard when I first visited Woodbury, and some years after (1828) I wrote and published in the



its story. How suggestive—how full of imaginings was Woodbury to me, when I visited it, five and forty years ago ! And the woods, teeming with the smaller game—the gray-squirrel, the partridge, and quail, my old West Mountain acquaintances—with what delight did I traverse them, gun in hand, accompanied by a

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Legendary at Boston, the following story, which has now become almost historical :

#### THE LEGEND OF BETHEL ROCK.

“In the picturesque state of Connecticut, there is not a spot more beautiful than the village of Pomperaug. It is situated not very far from the western border of the state, and derives its name from a tribe of Indians, who once inhabited it. It presents a small, but level valley, surrounded by hills, with a bright stream rippling through its meadows. The tops of the high grounds which skirt the valley, are covered with forests, but the slopes are smooth with cultivation, nearly to their summits. In the time of verdure, the plain displays a vividness of green like that of velvet, while the forests are dark with the rich hues supposed to be peculiar to the climate of England.

“The village of Pomperaug consists now of about two hundred houses, with three white churches, arranged on a street which passes along the eastern margin of the valley. At the distance of about twenty rods from this street, and running parallel to it for nearly a mile, is a rock, or ledge of rocks, of considerable elevation. From this, a distinct survey of the place may be had, almost at a glance. Beginning at the village, the spectator may count every house, and measure every garden ; he may compare the three churches, which now seem drawn close together ; he may trace the winding path of the river by the trees which bend over its waters ; he may enumerate the white farm-houses which dot the surface of the valley ; he may repose his eye on the checkered carpet which lies unrolled before him, or it may climb to the horizon over the dark blue hills which form the border of this enchanting picture.

“The spot which we have thus described did not long lie concealed from the prying sagacity of the first settlers of the colony of New Haven. Though occupied by a tribe of savages, as before intimated, it was very early surveyed by more than one of the emigrants. In the general rising of the Indians in Philip’s war, this tribe took part with the Pequods, and a large portion of them shared in their destruction. The chief himself was killed. His son, still a boy, with a remnant of his father’s people, who had been driven into exile, returned to their

black-eyed stripling, now my respected and gray-haired brother-in-law !

It was a great time, that happy week, for be it remembered that for a whole year I had been imprisoned in a country store. What melody was there in the forest echoes, then ! Ah ! I have since heard

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native valley, and lived for a time on terms of apparent submission to the English.

“The period had now arrived when the young chief had reached the age of manhood. He took, as was the custom with his fathers, the name of his tribe, and was accordingly called Pomperang. He was tall, finely formed, with an eye that gleamed like the flashes of a diamond. He was such a one as the savage would look upon with idolatry. His foot was swift as that of the deer ; his arrow was sure as the pursuit of the eagle ; his sagacity penetrating as the light of the sun.

“Such was Pomperaug. But his nation was passing away ; scarce fifty of his own tribe now dwelt in the valley in which his fathers had hunted for ages. The day of their dominion had gone. There was a spell over the Dark Warrior. The Great Spirit had sealed his doom. So thought the remaining Indians in the valley of Pomperaug, and they sullenly submitted to a fate which they could not avert.

“It was therefore without resistance, and, indeed, with expressions of amity, that they received a small company of English settlers into the valley. This company consisted of about thirty persons, from the New Haven colony, under the spiritual charge of the Rev. Noah Benison. He was a man of great age, but still of uncommon mental and bodily vigor. His years had passed the bourne of threescore and ten, and his hair was white as snow. But his tall and broad form was yet erect, and his cane of smooth hickory, with a golden head, was evidently a thing ‘more of ornament than use.’

“Mr. Benison had brought with him the last remnant of his family. She was the daughter of his only son, who, with his wife, had slept many years in the tomb. Her name was Mary, and well might she be the object of all the earthly affections which still beat in the bosom of one whom death had made acquainted with sorrow, and who but for her had been left alone.

“Mary Benison was now seventeen years of age. She had received her education in England, and had been but a few months in America. She was tall and slender, with a dark eye, full of soul and sincerity. Her hair was of a glossy black, parted upon a forehead of ample and expressive beauty. When at rest, her appearance was not striking.

Catalani and Garcia and Pasta and Sontag and Grisi. I have even heard the Swedish nightingale; nay, in France and Italy—the very home of music and song—-I have listened to the true nightingale, which has given to Jenny Lind her sweetest and most appropriate epithet; but never, in one or all, have I heard

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but if she spoke or moved, she fixed the attention of every beholder by the dignity of her air, blent with a tone of tender, yet serious sentiment.

“The settlers had been in the valley but a few months, when some matter of business relative to a purchase of land, brought Pomperaug to the hut of Mr. Benison. It was a bright morning in autumn, and while he was talking with the old gentleman at the door, Mary, who had been gathering flowers in the woods, passed by them and entered the place. The eye of the young Indian followed her with a gaze of entrancement. His face gleamed as if he had seen a vision of more than earthly beauty. But this emotion was visible only for a moment. With the habitual self-command of a savage, he turned again to Mr. Benison, and calmly pursued the subject which occasioned their meeting.

“Pomperaug went away, but he carried the image of Mary with him. He retired to his wigwan, but it did not please him. He ascended to the top of the rock, at the foot of which his wigwan was situated, and which now goes under the name of Pomperaug’s Castle, and looked down upon the river, which was flashing in the slant rays of the morning. He turned away, and sent his long gaze over the chequered leaves of the wood, which, like a sea, spread over the valley. He was still dissatisfied. With a single leap he sprang from the rock, and, alighting on his feet, snatched his bow and took the path which led into the forest. In a few moments he came back, and, seating himself on the rock, brooded for some hours in silence.

“The next morning Pomperaug repaired to the house of Mr. Benison to finish the business of the preceding day. He had before signified an inclination to accede to the terms proposed by Mr. Benison, but he now started unexpected difficulties. On being asked the reason, he answered as follows:

“‘Listen, father—hear a Red Man speak! Look into the air, and you see the eagle. The sky is his home, and doth the eagle love his home? Will he barter it for the sea? Look into the river, and ask the fish that is there, if he will sell it? Go to the dark-skinned hunter, and demand of him if he will part with his forests? Yet, father, I will part with my forests, if you will give me the singing bird that is in thy nest.’

such music as filled my ears, that incense-breathing morn, when I made a foray into the wilds of Woodbury! There was indeed no nightingale there: the season of wood minstrelsy was passed; even the thrush had descended from its perch aloft, and ceasing its melodies, was busy in the cares of its young

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“ ‘Savage,’ said the pilgrim, with a mingled look of disgust and indignation, ‘will the lamb lie down in the den of the wolf? Never! Dream not of it—I would sooner see her die! Name it not.’ As he spoke he struck his cane forcibly on the ground, and his broad figure seemed to expand and grow taller, while his eye gleamed, and the muscles of his brow contracted with a lowering and angry expression. The change of the old man’s appearance was sudden and striking. The air and manner of the Indian, too, was changed. There was now a kindled fire in his eye, a proud dignity in his manner, which a moment before was not there; but these had stolen upon him, with that imperceptible progress by which the dull colors of the serpent, when he becomes enraged, are succeeded by the glowing hues of the rainbow.

“The two now parted, and Pomperaug would not again enter into any negotiations for a sale of his lands. He kept himself, indeed, aloof from the English, and cultivated rather a hostile spirit in his people toward them.

“As might have been expected, difficulties soon grew up between the two parties, and violent feelings were shortly excited on both sides. This broke out into open quarrels, and one of the white men was shot by a savage lurking in the woods. This determined the settlers to seek instant revenge, and accordingly they followed the Indians into the broken and rocky districts which lie east of the valley, whither, expecting pursuit, they had retreated.

“It was about an hour before sunset, when the English, consisting of twenty well-armed men, led by their reverend pastor, were marching through a deep ravine, about two miles east of the town. The rocks on either side were lofty, and so narrow was the dell, that the shadows of night had already gathered over it. The pursuers had sought their enemy the whole day in vain; and having lost all trace of them, they were now returning to their homes. Suddenly a wild yell burst from the rocks at their feet, and twenty savages sprang up before them. An arrow pierced the breast of the pilgrim leader, and he fell. Two Indians were shot, and the remainder fled. Several of the English were wounded, but none mortally, save the aged pastor.

“With mournful silence they bore back the body of their father. He

ones, now beginning life in the bush. It was the echo of my own heart, that gave to simple and familiar sounds—that of the far-off barking dog, the low of distant herds, the swing of the village bell, the murmur of the brooks, the rustle of the leaves in the joyous breath of morning—their real melody. And

was buried in a sequestered nook of the forest, and with a desolate and breaking heart the orphan Mary turned away from his grave, to be for the first time alone in their humble house in the wilderness.

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“A year passed. The savages had disappeared, and the rock on which the pilgrim met his death had been consecrated by many prayers. His blood was still visible on the spot, and his people often came with reverence to kneel there and offer up their petitions. The place they called *Bethel Rock*, and piously they deemed that their hearts were visited here with the richest gifts of heavenly grace.

“It was a sweet evening in summer, when Mary Benison, for the last time, went to spend an hour at this holy spot. Long had she knelt, and most fervently had she prayed. Oh! who can tell the bliss of that heavenly communion to which a pure heart is admitted in the hours of solitude and silence! The sun went down, and as the vail of evening fell, the full moon climbed over the eastern ledge, pouring its silver light into the valley, and Mary was still kneeling, still communing with Him who seeth in secret.

“At length a slight noise, like the crushing of a leaf, woke her from her trance, and with quickness and agitation she set out on her return. Alarmed at her distance from home at such an hour, she proceeded with great rapidity. She was obliged to climb up the face of the rocks with care, as the darkness rendered it a critical and dangerous task. At length she reached the top. Standing upon the verge of the cliff, she then turned a moment to look back upon the valley. The moon was shining full upon the vale, and she gazed with a mixture of awe and delight upon the sea of silvery leaves which slept in deathlike repose beneath her. She then turned to pursue her path homeward, but what was her amazement to see before her, in the full moonlight, the tall form of Pomperaug! She shrieked, and, swift as his own arrow, she sprang over the dizzy cliff. The Indian listened—there was a moment of silence—then a heavy sound—and the dell was still as the tomb.

“The fate of Mary was known only to Pomperaug. He buried her with a lover’s care amid the rocks of the glen. Then, bidding adieu to

then the merry mockery of the red-squirrel, flying, rather than leaping from tree to tree, with the hearty guffaw of his gray brother, rioting in the abundance of some aged hickory: how did these add to the general harmony! And more than all this, there was occasionally the low whistle of the quail, stealing through the leaves, attended at intervals by the

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his native valley, he joined his people, who had retired to the banks of the Housatonic.

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“More than half a century subsequent to this event, a rumor ran through the village of Pomperaug, that some Indians were seen at night, bearing a heavy burden along the margin of the river, which swept the base of Pomperaug’s Castle. In the morning a spot was found near by, on a gentle hill, where the fresh earth showed that the ground had been recently broken. A low heap of stones on the place revealed the secret. They remain there to this day, and the little mound is shown by the villagers as Pomperaug’s grave.”

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Such is the legend as I wrote it. The reader will find in Cothren’s History of Ancient Woodbury, the exact version of the story, as authentic chroniclers have now established it. The true name of the place is Woodbury, instead of Pomperaug: the Indian hero must be called Waramaukeag, not Pomperaug: the aged minister is to be called Walker, in lieu of Benison; and the heroine, his niece, must bear the same name, with the baptismal title of Sarah. With these emendations, popular faith has sanctioned the general outlines of my invention. Thus, it seems, a romance requires about thirty years to crystallize into veritable history!

The name of Bethel Rock is, however, strictly historical; here the ancient settlers actually assembled for worship; and in commemoration of this fact, a few years since, Dr. Beecher, then settled at Litchfield, with several other clergymen of the vicinity, came hither and united in prayer. The records of Woodbury, as given us by the historian already alluded to, show its chronicles to be almost as full of incident, legend, and adventure, as the Highlands of Scotland. All that is wanted to render them as deeply interesting, is the inspiration of the poet to sing and set them to music. Mr. Cothren has made a good beginning, for his history breathes of romance without impeaching its truthfulness, as is avinced by the titles of some of his topics, like the following: Legend



rolling drum of the partridge,\* reminding me, with all the force of old associations, that I was once more at liberty in the forest. How great, how impressive do little and even common things become, when seen through the prismatic lens of youthful remembrance!

During our stay in Woodbury, as I have said, we lodged at the house of the aged clergyman, Father Benedict,† as he was generally called. I remember

of Squaw Rock: the Belt of Wampum: Mr. Boardman's Praying Match: Watchbrok's Disclosure, &c., &c.

\* All American woodsmen will know that I here speak of the ruffed grouse, which in the autumn makes the forest echo by rapidly beating some old decayed trunk of a fallen tree with its wings. To a sportsman, it is a sound of lively interest—for it seems to be a sort of challenge to the sport.

† Rev. Noah Benedict was a native of Danbury, and graduated at Nassau Hall in 1757. He received the degree of Master of Arts, *ad eundem*, from Yale College, in 1760, and was a fellow of that institution from 1801 to 1812. He was a man of sound piety, and of great dignity and amiability of temper. He held an honored place in the affections of his people. He was successful as a spiritual teacher, and was followed to the tomb by his parishioners with hearts throbbing with grief. His church has been noted for the length of time it has enjoyed the services of its ministers. There is perhaps no other instance in the country where a church has been presided over by three pastors, as has been the case with this, for the long period of one hundred and forty-three years.

Mr. Benedict was spoken of, during his life, and is still so remembered, as one of the fairest specimens of the good clergymen of Connecticut. Constitutionally, he had a well-balanced mind; singularly discreet and exemplary in his every-day deportment and in all the relations of life; as a preacher and counselor, he held a high rank. His temper was even, and his condition was placid and easy. Temptations, he was cautious, and even zealous to put, if possible, out of his way. He once had a favorite horse—young, sound, gentle, active, and graceful; the animal was admired by his rider's parishioners. But Mr. Benedict, to the surprise of all, sold the horse. A neighbor expressed his astonishment at the event, and inquired the reason of it. "He was growing unruly," was the grave pastor's reply. "But I thought," said the man, "that he was a very orderly horse." "No," was the rejoinder; "he was growing



his voice still, which was remarkable for its tender, affectionate tones. There was also a childlike simplicity in his prayers, which was very touching. These made such an impression on me that I could now repeat several passages, which were perhaps favorites, as they came in every petition.

Of Judge Smith, his son-in-law—whom I have already mentioned—I have also the most vivid recollections. He was then about fifty years of age. His hair was jet black, his eye black and piercing, his complexion swarthy. He was of middle height, of a large and massive mould. There was a mingled plainness and majesty about his appearance, such as might have suited Cincinnatus. He was a great farmer, and devoted himself with intense interest to his tillage, his cattle, and his flocks, during the recesses of the courts. At these times, he seemed to delight in the rustic sports and simple pastimes to which he had been accustomed in early life. After the day's task was done, he was often seen in the midst of his workmen, gathered upon some grassy plain, for the race, the wrestle, or other gymnastic

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quite unruly: he once got into the pulpit, and I thought it was time to part with him."

This minister was blessed in his family, and honored in the alliances of his children by marriage, and by their eminent usefulness and the distinctions to which they attained in public offices and employments. His people never desired his separation: death effected it in the year 1818, at the age of seventy-six. He lives in the sweet and grateful remembrance of the aged in his parish and out of it; and the present generation of Woodbury have heard from the reverential and affectionate, the story of his goodness.—*Colthren's History of Ancient Woodbury.*

exercises—he being the umpire, and joining heartily in the spirit of frolic and fun, proper to the occasion. Nothing could be more admirable than his intercourse with his family and the people around him. All knew him to be the judge, yet all felt that he was even more to them—the father, friend, and neighbor.

Few men have left behind them a biography at once so striking and so spotless. “Perhaps,” says the chronicler, “the history and character of no other man could be more profitably studied by the youth of ardent aspirations, feeling the fire of genius burning within him, and struggling under the power of adverse circumstances for an honorable position in society, than that of Mr. Smith. He furnishes a brilliant example of what the innate force of a mighty intellect can accomplish, though surrounded by difficulties and obstacles.”\*

The father of Mr. Smith was poor, and hence he had an extremely limited education. While yet young, he and his brother were engaged in trading between Philadelphia and the northern parts of New England. Being once at Rutland, Vermont, and having a little leisure, he went into the court-house, and heard a trial there. He became deeply interested, and after a little reflection, he said to his brother—“I have been to Philadelphia, to sell new rum, for the last time: I am determined to be a lawyer. Ignorant as I am, I

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\* Cothren's History of Ancient Woodbury, p. 398.

could have managed the case I heard in court, better than either of the parties engaged. My mind is made up!" Soon after this, he offered himself as a student in the office of Judge Reeve of Litchfield. The latter, knowing his unlettered condition, attempted to dissuade him from an attempt which seemed so hopeless. As Smith persisted, however, he lent him a book, desiring him to read it, and come back in a week for an examination. This he did, and the judge was so struck with his intelligence and capacity, that he received him into his office, and thenceforward gave him every encouragement. Such was his progress, that he was admitted to the bar, even before the time usually required for study had elapsed.

What had been so well begun was, in due time, finished in a similar manner. Mr. Smith rose with unexampled rapidity to the front ranks of his profession, and that too at a time when the Connecticut bar shone with a constellation of great names. His clearness of statement, his simple but vigorous logic, his fertility and felicity of illustration, all aided by a manly presence and a voice of prodigious power, gave him a mastery alike over the plainest and the most instructed audience. These high gifts were nerved by an iron will, and when once he was roused to an earnest effort, his course was marked with a crushing energy, which bore down all opposition. It is said that sometimes, in the consciousness of his power, he rode rough-shod over his adversary, though

in general his practice was signalized not only by justice but amenity.

It appears that although Mr. Smith thus rose to distinction, he still preserved the good-will of the people at large, in an uncommon degree. He soon passed through various stages of official advancement: in 1789, he represented his native town in the General Assembly; in 1795, he was sent to Congress; in 1800, he was a member of the State Council; in 1806, he was judge of the Superior Court, an office which he held for eleven years, when the state of his health compelled him to resign. In all these positions he was distinguished for his ability, his good sense, his right feeling, his patriotism, justice, dignity. Yet it is recorded that in this elevated career, he never ceased to be stamped with the simplicity of the country farmer. The farm was, indeed, the place which he seemed most to enjoy. His intercourse with country people was marked with a fellowship very rare in a professional man, and hence, no doubt, that general feeling of kindliness among the masses, which even yet cherishes his memory in his native valley, and indeed throughout his native State.

It is greatly to be regretted that none of the higher oratorical efforts of this great man are preserved. The reporting of speeches—so common now—was unknown in his day, and he had too little love of self-display to report what he said, himself. There was, in general, a modesty, a self-forgetfulness about him,

quite as remarkable as the greatness of his intellect. He shrunk from no public duty, but he coveted no public honors. When not officially called away, his home, his farm, and the house of worship—for he was a man of steadfast piety—were his chosen scenes and sources of interest. When I saw him, he was at the height of his fame: all eyes looked at him with admiration. It may be imagined, therefore, that a strong impression was made upon my mind, when—one evening chancing to be at his house—I saw him kneel down in the midst of his gathered family, including the servants, and offer up his evening prayer, with all the earnest simplicity and feeling of a child, addressing a revered but beloved father. There was something inexpressibly touching and affecting in the scene, and especially in the thrilling, pleading tones of the speaker, poured out as if from the fullness of an overflowing heart. It was, indeed, a scene never to be forgotten—a lesson never to fail of imparting instruction.\*

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\* The family of Judge Smith has been marked with great vigor of mind and character. He assisted his brother Nathan—who had shared in his early poverty and depression—to fit himself for the bar, and he finally rose to great eminence—professional and political. He died at Washington—being then a Senator of the United States—Dec. 6, 1835, aged 65.

Truman Smith, nephew of Judge Smith, settled at Litchfield, and became a leading member of the bar. In 1848, he was elected to the Senate of the United States, and was distinguished for those masculine powers of oratory, combined with practical good sense, which marked his eminent relatives, just named. Though elected for a second term, he resigned his seat in 1854.

Nathaniel B. Smith, only child of the judge, inherited his farm, and

## LETTER XXIV.

*The Cold Winter and a Sharp Ride—Description of Danbury—The Hat Manufactory—The Sandimanians—Gen. Wooster's Monument—Death of my Brother-in-law—Master White—Mathematics—Farewell to Danbury.*

MY DEAR C\*\*\*\*\*

We returned to Danbury after a tour of some five or six weeks. The succeeding autumn and winter presented no peculiar incident—with a single exception. There was, if I rightly remember, in the month of February,\* a certain "cold Friday," which passed down to succeeding generations as among the marvels of the time. It had snowed heavily for three days, and the ground was covered three feet deep. A driving wind from the northeast then set in, and growing colder and colder, it became at last so severe as to force everybody to shelter. This continued for two days, the whole air being filled with sleet, so that the sun, without a cloud in the sky, shone dim and gray as through a fog. The third day, the wind increased, both in force and intensity of cold. Horses, cattle, fowls, sheep, perished in their coverings. The roads were blocked up with enormous drifts: the mails were

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his love of agriculture, which he has pursued with great science and success. He has filled various public offices, but probably values among his highest honors, his medals for the best examples of stock and tillage, awarded him, on various occasions, by the Connecticut State Agricultural Society. He is now president of that institution (1856).

\* This was, I think, in 1809, though it might have been a year later

stopped, traveling was suspended ; the world, indeed, seemed paralyzed, and the circulation of life to be arrested.

On the morning of this third day—which was the ominous and famous Friday—word was brought to my sister that a poor family, to whom she had long been a kind of providence, about two miles off, was in danger of starvation. She knew no fear, and tolerated no weakness. A thing with her that ought to be done, was to be done. Therefore, a sack was filled with bread, meat, candles, and a pint of rum : this was lashed around my waist. The horse was brought to the door—I mounted and set off. I knew the animal well, and we had enjoyed many a scamper together. He was indeed after my own heart—clean-limbed, with full, knowing eyes, and small, pointed, sensitive ears. He had a cheerful walk, a fleet, skimming trot, a swift gallop, and all these paces we had often tried. I think he knew who was on his back ; but when we got to the turning of the road, which brought his nostrils into the very tunnel of the gale, he snorted, whirled backward, and seemed resolved to return. I however brought him sternly to his work, gave him sharp advice in the ribs, and assured him that I was resolved to be master. Hesitating a moment—as if in doubt whether I could be in earnest—he started forward ; yet so keen was the blast, that he turned aside his head, and screamed as if his nostrils were pierced with hot iron. On he



went, however, in some instances up to the saddle in the drift, yet clearing it at full bounds.

In a few minutes we were at the door of the miserable hut, now half buried in a snow-drift. I was just in time. The wretched inmates—a mother and three small children—without fire, without food, without help or hope—were in bed, poorly clothed, and only keeping life in their bodies by a mutual cherishing of warmth, like pigs or puppies in a similar extremity. The scene within was dismal in the extreme. The fireplace was choked with snow, which had fallen down the chimney: the ill-adjusted doors and windows admitted alike the drift and the blast, both of which swept across the room in cutting currents. As I entered, the pale, haggard mother, comprehending at a glance that relief had come, burst into a flood of tears. I had no time for words. I threw them the sack, remounted my horse, and, the wind at my back, I flew home. One of my ears was a little frost-bitten, and occasionally for years after, a tingling and itching sensation there, reminded me of my ride, which after all left an agreeable remembrance upon my mind.

Danbury\* is a handsome town, now numbering

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\* Danbury is one of the semi-capitals of Fairfield county, the courts being held here and at Fairfield, alternately. The main street is nearly two miles in length, and presents many handsome residences. The society is marked by more than ordinary intelligence and refinement. The Indian name of the place was *Pah-qui-o-que*, and it was first settled by the English in 1684. It has been prolific in distinguished men: the names of its early founders having been spread far and wide, and many

six thousand inhabitants ; but in my time there were scarcely more than half that number. It is chiefly built on a long, wide street, crossed near the northern extremity by a small river, a branch of the Housatonic, which, having numerous rapids, affords abundance of mill-sites in its course. At this crossing, there were two extensive hat-factories, famous over the whole country, and belonging, the one to White, Brothers & Co., and the other to Tweedy & Co. Their hats were the rage with the fashionable Genins, St. Johns, Knoxes, and Beebes of that age. I believe, indeed, that these factories, with others of more modern date, are still maintained.

Nearly all the workmen in these establishments—of whom there were several hundred—at the time I am describing, were foreigners, mostly English and Irish. A large part of the business of our store was the furnishing of rum to these poor wretches, who bought one or two quarts on Saturday night, and fuddled themselves till Monday, and frequently till Tuesday. A factory workman of those days was thought to be born to toil, to get drunk, and make a hell of his home. Philanthropy itself had not then lifted its eye or its hopes above this hideous malaria of custom. We had imported these ideas from England and other foreign manufacturing countries, and they reigned over the

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of them being yet preserved in the present residents of the place. Among these, the names of Wildam, Mygatt, Hoyt, Tweedy, Benedict, White, Starr, Knapp, &c., are conspicuous.

public mind. That large humanity, which has done so much, in modern times, to remove vice and crime, and to elevate the public standard of morals, had not then set its Star in the West, calling the Wise and Good to a new revelation of life. It is a modern discovery that manufacturing towns may rise up, where comfort, education, morals, and religion, in their best and happiest exercise, may be possessed by the toiling masses. This is not only a modern, but an American discovery, and refutes volumes of abuse that long-eared philosophy has leveled at republicanism.

Danbury is not without other points of interest—historical and social. It was, as I have shown, the scene of one of those wanton and wicked outrages, perpetrated upon the people of Connecticut, and indeed of many other parts of this country, which made the British name offensive to God and man, during the Revolutionary war. In commemoration of the life and services of General Wooster, who fell at Ridgefield, in an encounter with these British marauders, there has recently been erected at Danbury a beautiful monument of Portland granite, forty feet in height, with the following inscription :

DAVID WOOSTER,  
First Major general of the Connecticut troops  
in the Army of the Revolution ;  
Brigadier-general of the United Colonies.  
Born at Hartford, March 2, 1710 or 11 ;  
Wounded at Ridgefield, April 27, 1777, while defending  
the liberties of America,  
And nobly died at Danbury,  
May 2, 1777.

The character of Wooster\* was indeed a noble one, and the people of Danbury have shown a wise discernment in the construction of this beautiful memorial of his character and career.

One item more and I shall take leave of Danbury. About midway between the northern and southern extremities of the long main street, and a little to the west of it, there was a building of moderate size, somewhat between a church and a barn, in aspect. It was without tower or steeple, so it could not be the first: it was nicely built and tidily kept, and could not be the last. It was, in fact, the sanctuary of the Sandimānians, or, according to the popular accent, Sandimīnians; a small sect of forty members then, and now dwindled to a still smaller number.

The history of its founder is well known. Robert Sandiman, a Scotchman, having adopted the tenets, and married the daughter, of Rev. John Glass—an able

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\* This monument stands on a solid platform, about twenty feet square, at the corners of which are massive stone posts, which support an iron railing. The plinth is richly moulded, and the name of WOOSTER appears in bold raised letters, upon the front or south side. The General is represented, in a beautifully sculptured relief, in the act of falling from his horse, at the moment he received the fatal ball. Above this, appears a delineation of the State arms; and higher still, the main shaft is ornamented with a trophy, consisting of a sash, sword, and epaulettes. On two opposite sides are various appropriate masonic and military emblems. The whole is surmounted with a globe, on which stands the American Eagle, bearing in his beak the wreath of victory. This fine column was consecrated by imposing ceremonies on the 27th April, 1854, at which the Governor of the State, with many distinguished citizens, deputations from various lodges, and a large concourse of people, assisted. The oration, by Hon. H. C. Deming, was deeply interesting, as well on account of its eloquence as its historical reminiscences.

divine, who seems to have been the originator of the Scotch Independents—became a distinguished defender of his theological views. After a time, he was invited to come to America by some of his admirers there, and accordingly he arrived in 1764, and settled among them—first at Boston, but finally taking up his residence at Danbury. He appears to have been much disappointed at the character of his adherents, and the general state of society in America. This was aggravated by his taking the tory side in the agitation which now verged toward the Revolution. His days were in fact embittered, and his flock reduced to a handful of followers. His death took place in 1771, and a simple marble slab, in the burial-ground, opposite the court-house, commemorates his name and history. He was doubtless a man of ability, but his career displays the usual narrowness and inconsistency of sectarianism founded upon persons, rather than principles. His doctrine was, that faith is a mere intellectual conviction—a bare belief of the bare truth. Of course so cold a religion, scarcely distinguishable in its principle from deism, and giving no satisfaction to that constant craving of the soul for a more exalted and spiritual life, could not prosper. It was only adapted to a few rigid minds like his own. His adherents in my time met at their little church on the afternoons of Sundays and Thursdays; they sat around a large table, each with a Bible. The men read and discoursed, as the spirit dictated: the

women were silent. Spectators were admitted, but the worshipers seemed not to recognize their presence. After a prayer and a hymn, they went to the house of one of the members, and had a love-feast. "Greet one another with a holy kiss," was their maxim and their practice.

These customs remain\* to the present day, save only as to the kiss, which, according to the current report, was modified some years since. The congregation was rather mixed, and included the W . . . . R . . . . s, a family of wealth and refinement, down to N. S . . . ., the blacksmith. Mrs. W . . . . R . . . . was a woman of great delicacy of person, manners, and dress: her lace was the finest, her silks the richest, her muslin the most immaculate. She was in breeding a lady, in position an aristocrat, in feeling an exclusive. And yet, one day, as she walked forth, and chanced to turn the corner, close to the central meeting-house, wending her way homeward, she came suddenly upon the village Vulcan, above mentioned. He was in front of his shop, and being a man of full habit, and having just put down the heel of an ox, which he was shoeing, he was damp with perspiration. Nevertheless, the faith was strong within him: "Greet one another with a holy kiss!" rushed to his mind, and he saluted Mrs. W . . . . R . . . ., as in duty bound.

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\* A friend writes me (1856) that the Sandimanian church at Danbury now numbers three male and fifteen female members. The congregation comprises about thirty persons.



She, a saint in profession, but alas, in practice a sinner, as doth appear—returned not the salute! Had she been of another sect, abstinence would have been a virtue, but in this, it was of course a crime. Upon this incident rocked and quaked the whole Sandimanian church for some months. At last the agitation subsided, and the holy kiss was thenceforward either abandoned or given with discretion. Such is the tale as it was told to me, nearly fifty years ago.

It may be remarked that Sandimanianism, which originated in a hard, sarcastic mind, subsided into a sort of amiable and tranquil Quakerism. Its members were noted for purity of life, and some of them for habits of abstraction, which marked themselves in a cold pallor upon the countenance. Seeming to be conscious of a chill at the heart, they sought to quicken the circulation of the Spirit, by outward observances and by peculiarities of worship, such as might distinguish them from other Christians. "I am better than thou, for I am other than thou," has often proved a consoling doctrine for the narrow people of narrow creeds.

A few brief sketches more, and I have done with Danbury. The health of my brother-in-law gradually failed, and at last, as winter approached, he took to his room, and finally to his bed. By almost insensible degrees, and with singular tranquillity of mind and body, he approached his end. It was a



trait of his character, to believe nothing, to do nothing, by halves. Having founded his faith on Christ, Christianity was now, in its duties, its promises, and its anticipations, as real as life itself. He was afflicted with no doubts, no fears. With his mind in full vigor, his strong intellect vividly awake, he was ready to shake hands with death, and to enter into the presence of his God. The hour came. He had taken leave of his friends, and then feeling a sense of repose, he asked to be left alone. They all departed save one, who sat apart, listening to every breath. In a few moments she came and found him asleep, but it was the sleep that knows no waking!

I continued in the store alone for several months, selling out the goods, and closing up the affairs of the estate. I had now a good deal of time to myself, and thumbed over several books, completing my reading of Shakspeare, to which I have already alluded. It happened that we had a neighbor over the way—a good-natured, chatty old gentleman, by the name of Ebenezer White. He had been a teacher, and had a great taste for mathematics. In those days it was the custom to put forth in the newspapers puzzling questions of figures, and to invite their solution. Master White was sure to give the answer, first. In fact, his genius for mathematics was so large, that it left rather a moderate space in his brain for common sense. He was, however, full of good feelings, and

was now entirely at leisure. Indeed, time hung heavy on his hands, so he made me frequent visits, and in fact lounged away an hour or two of almost every day, at the store. I became at last interested in mathematics, and under his good-natured and gratuitous lessons, I learned something of geometry and trigonometry, and thus passed on to surveying and navigation. This was the first drop of real science that I ever tasted—I might almost say the last, for though I have since skimmed a good many books, I feel that I have really mastered almost nothing.

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## LETTER XXV.

*Farewell to Danbury—Hartford—My First Master and his Family—Merino Sheep—A Wind-up—Another Change—My new Employer—A new Era in Life—George Sheldon.*

MY DEAR C\*\*\*\*\*

I must now introduce you to a new era in my life. Early in the summer of 1811, I took leave of Danbury, and went to Hartford. On my arrival there, I was installed in the dry-goods store of C. B. K . . . , my father having made the arrangement some weeks before. My master was a young man of excellent disposition, with a pretty wife and two fat cherubs of children. I was kindly treated in this family, with which I took my meals. Many a happy

romp had I with the children—this exercise filling in some degree the aching void of my bosom, arising from isolation—for I was not only in a new place, but I was almost without friends or acquaintances. My master had no real turn for business, and spent much of his time away, leaving the affairs of the shop to an old fudge of a clerk, by the name of Jones, and to me. Things went rather badly, and he sought to mend his fortune by a speculation in Merino sheep\*—then the rage of the day. A ram sold

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\* The Merino sheep appears to be a breed which originated in the mountain districts of Estremadura, in Spain, in the time of the Roman dominion, from the careful mixture of celebrated European and Asiatic breeds. In the time of Tiberius, a ram of this stock was sold for a thousand dollars, an enormous price, if we consider the value of money at that period. The more tender breeds of sheep became extinct in Italy and Greece during the invasions of the northern barbarians, but the hardy Merinoes, having thriven in the mountains, survived, and have come down to modern times. All the European breeds, now celebrated for the fineness of their wool, are crosses of the Merino.

The first Merinoes brought into the United States were imported by Chancellor Robert R. Livingston—a pair of each sex—in 1802. M. Delessert sent a few others, soon after. Little attention, however, was paid to the subject, and it seems that about 1805, half-breeds were sold at a price below that of common sheep. Afterward, a larger importation was made by Col. Humphries, who had been our Minister to Spain, and our Consul, Jarvis: these were three hundred in number, and arrived in 1810. Humphries tells us that he had turned his thoughts to this subject before he left Spain, and as he seems to have consulted his muse in every thing that interested him, he had there written a poem, the burden of which is found in the following stanzas:

“Oh might my guidance from the downs of Spain,  
Lead a white flock across the western main;  
Famed like the bark that bore the Argonaut  
Should be the vessel with the burden fraught!  
Clad in the raiment my Merinoes yield;  
Like Cincinnatus, fed from my own field;  
Far from ambition, grandeur, care, and strife,  
In sweet fruition of domestic life;

for a thousand dollars and a ewe for a hundred—a great discount certainly for gender; but Maria Antoinette Brown and her school had not yet equalized the sexes. Fortunes were made and lost in a day, during this mania. With my master, it was great cry and little wool; for after buying a flock and driving it to Vermont, where he spent three months, he came back pretty well shorn—that is, three thousand dollars out of pocket! This soon brought his affairs to a crisis, and so in the autumn I was transferred to the dry-goods store of J. B. H. ....

My new employer had neither wife nor child to take up his time, so he devoted himself sedulously to business. He was indeed made for it—elastic in his frame, quick-minded, of even temper, and assiduous politeness. He was already well established, and things marched along as if by rail. For a time, we had another clerk, but he was soon dismissed, and I was the only assistant; my master, however, seldom leaving the shop during business hours. Had trade been in me, I might now have learned it. I think I may say, that I fulfilled my duty, at least in form; I was regular in my hours, kept the books duly journalized and posted. I never consciously wronged arithmetic to the amount of a farthing. I duly per-

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There would I pass with friends, beneath my trees,  
What rests from public life, in letter'd ease."

This poetic aspiration became history: in 1809, when Madison was inaugurated, his coat was made of Merino cloth from a manufactory established by Humphries, and his small-clothes from one founded by Chancellor Livingston. See *Cyclopedia of Amer. Literature*, vol. i. p. 376

formed my task at the counter. Yet, in all this, I was a slave: my heart was not in my work. My mind was away: I dreamed of other things; I thought of other pursuits.

And yet I scarcely knew all this. I had certainly no definite plan for the future. A thousand things floated before my imagination. Every book I read drew me aside into its own vortex. Poetry made me poetical; politics made me political; travels made me truant. I was restless, for I was in a wrong position, yet I asked no advice, for I did not know that I needed it. My head and heart were a hive of thoughts and feelings—swarming in the sunny spring-tide of life—without the regulating and sedative supremacy of a clear and controlling intelligence. My imagination was a flame, playing around my yet clouded understanding, and giving to this its own wavering and blinding light.

It may seem to you, my dear C..., that I am treating with undue emphasis and detail this unspoken history of a boy in a country store. Yet such—in the main—is life, with the great as with the small. Remember, I am speaking of that crisis of existence, when an impulse to the right or left may determine the direction and the end of a whole career. You are a philosopher, and can not be indifferent to any experience that may throw light upon the history of the human heart. You are, besides, a parent, and as such, can not be too well advised of what passes in

the bosom of youth, and especially as they stand at the door of manhood. No one can know too well the mastery which slight events at this period may exercise over a long and fearful future. Therefore, pass not disdainfully over this page of my story !

My experience was, no doubt, in some degree exceptional. With considerable knowledge, gathered by glimpses, in a scramble, as I passed along in an irregular and uncertain road, I had really no education in the sense of mental discipline. What I knew was by halves, and it had been so acquired that my mind was a thicket of weeds and flowers, without a defined path to get into or out of it. All that I had was instinct, somewhat enlightened, perhaps, by my early religious training. On questions of right and wrong, in feeling and conduct, my conscience should have been a safe guide ; but in respect to the understanding, as to logic of thought—I scarcely knew the process. My imagination was like an unbridled colt, and it carried me whither it would. In reflecting upon this in maturer years, I have compared my mind to that slippery bird of the sea—the loon—which usually comes up in the direction exactly opposite to that in which it goes down. In argument, in reflection, in deliberation, with myself or others—if I began upon one thing, I was pretty sure to get speedily stranded upon another. All that I knew of myself was, that I felt ; I had not yet, in fact, learned the process of sober induction and methodical reasoning. I had just that

little learning which is a dangerous thing, because it imparts intoxication, not inspiration.

So far, then, my condition was certainly peculiar. But in regard to that impulse which rises up in the youthful bosom like a gale to the ship, coming in the midst of seeming calm, and bringing every sail and spar suddenly and by surprise to its work—I was like other boys at the threshold of a new and startling era in life. What gigantic strides seem then to be at command with the seven-leagued boots of gristle manhood! And yet, with such an impetus, the youth may yield himself to a word, a thought, which takes the helm, and guides the spirit, through weal or woe, to its doom.

“My boyhood vanish’d, and I woke,

Startled, to manhood’s early morn—

No father’s hand my pride to yoke,

No mother’s angel voice to warn!

\* \* \* \* \*

The spark forever tends to flame—

The ray that quivers in the plash

Of yonder river, is the same

That feeds the lightning’s ruddy flash.

The summer breeze that fans the rose,

Or eddies down some flowery path,

Is but the infant gale that blows

To-morrow with the whirlwind’s wrath.

And He alone who wields the storm,

And bids the arrowy lightnings play,

Can guide the heart, when, wild and warm,

It springs on passion’s wings away.



One angel minister is sent,  
To guard and guide us to the sky,  
And still her sheltering wing is bent,  
Till manhood rudely throws it by.  
Oh, then with mad disdain we spurn  
A mother's gentle teaching; throw  
Her bosom from us, and we burn  
To rush in freedom, where the glow  
Of pleasure lights the dancing wave—  
We launch the bark, we woo the gale,  
And reckless of the darkling wave  
That yawns below, we speed the sail!"

Thus many a youth rushes upon his fate. Some, indeed, are always sober and judicious: they plod on wisely and prosperously, not so much on account of the influence of home instruction, nor indeed by happy accident, but through inherent steadiness of character. Yet these cases are not frequent. Nearly all pass through the straits of Scylla on one side and of Charybdis on the other. Some escape, but, alas, how many are fatally wrecked! how many only live on to scandalize society, to break the hearts of their parents, to debase and degrade themselves and their companions! It is sad to reflect upon the number of young men who are lost at this turning-point—this "doubling the Cape"—of life. Several of my earliest acquaintances have gone down, long since, to their graves, the victims of those hidden quicksands which beset the youthful voyager, at the very moment when his sails are filled with flattering hopes and generous

aspirations—yet, also, with presumptuous confidence. In short, they were shoved out to sea with no pilot on board but their own passions, and destruction was but the too natural consequence.

That I escaped is no special merit of my own. I formed an acquaintance with George Sheldon, which soon ripened into friendship, and this had great influence on my future life. He was, at the time, a clerk in the establishment of Hudson & Goodwin,\* a firm

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\* The following obituary notice, abridged from the Connecticut Courant of May 14, 1844, is worthy of insertion, as well for its just picture of a good man's life, as for the facts of general interest which it presents.

"Mr. George Goodwin, whose death was yesterday announced, was born in this city (Hartford) on the 7th day of January, 1757, and died the 13th day of May, 1844, being the oldest man in the town. He was descended from one of those ancient families who made their way from Newtown, Mass., through the wilderness, to find a new home on the banks of the Connecticut river.

"At the age of nine years he was placed as an apprentice in a printing-office, where was published a small weekly print, called the Connecticut Courant, the first paper printed in this town, and for many years the only one upon this river—the history of which is so intimately connected with that of the deceased as to demand notice. The first number was published by Thomas Green, October 29, 1764. In April, 1768, Mr. Green associated with him in this enterprise, Mr. Ebenezer Watson, and retired from it in December, 1770, leaving it in the hands of Mr. Watson, alone. In September, 1777, Mr. Watson died, and Mr. Goodwin, a young man of but twenty years of age, was left to conduct it. In January, 1778, he became a partner with the widow of Mr. Watson in the establishment, and so continued until her marriage with Mr. Hudson, in March, 1779, when he formed a partnership with that gentleman, which continued nearly forty years, or until 1815. Mr. Goodwin, after the dissolution of the concern, continued to superintend the paper until the year 1836, when he relinquished it to the present proprietor. But it can hardly be said that his connection with this paper ended at that time, for such were his habits of industry, and so fixed were his associations, and so long had he been identified with this establishment, that he made it one of the stipulations of his contract, that he should have a right to work in the office as formerly, when he

then known all over this hemisphere, as publishers of the Bible, Webster's Spelling-book, and the Connecticut Courant. They were, in the popular mind, regarded as the bulwarks of religion, education, and federalism—three pretty staunch supporters of the New England platform, in that epoch of the world.

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was so disposed—and for several years after did he avail himself of this privilege. Probably no man in this country, perhaps no man in the world, had pursued this business for so long a time—that is, for nearly eighty years. While under his auspices, this paper gained a circulation almost unknown to country papers, and for a long course of years gave a tone to the morals and policy of the State.

“He was always found on the side of religion and morals, nor was he ashamed to profess Christ before men : his great grief was that he had not done it earlier. He was a special friend of temperance, and imputed his good health and success in life largely, to a rigid abstinence from intoxicating drinks.

“His politics were learned in the school of the American Revolution. In his opinions he was firm and decided, but modest and unassuming. Without any advantages of education beyond that of a common school, he became a highly useful and intelligent editor, and one whose influence was extensively felt in this community. His mind was active and sprightly. He was frank and pleasant in his manners ; he had a good share of wit and humor, and in his younger days, was the life of the circle into which he entered. He was one of the last of the old school gentlemen among us, and he certainly was a good representative of that interesting class.

“It is hardly necessary to say how well he discharged all the duties of private life ; how kind and beneficent he was to the poor, or how dear to his friends. Happy in his family circle, he passed those years, which are ordinarily years ‘of labor and sorrow,’ in cheerful gratitude to God, and humble hope in Christ, with few of the pains and sorrows of old age—until, after a sickness of a few days, he fell like a shock of corn fully ripe in the hope of a glorious immortality beyond the grave.”

The following lines by Mrs. Sigourney are a worthy and pleasing tribute to this good man's memory :

#### OUR OLDEST MAN.

Meek patriarch of our city ! art *thou* dead ?

The just, the saintly, and the full of days,

The crown of ripen'd wisdom on thy head,

The poor man's blessing, and the good man's praise ?

It is very seldom that plodding industry rises so high. Mr. Hudson was a homespun old respectability, of plain, strong sense, sturdy principles, and rather dry, harsh manners, having also a limp in the leg. He took charge of the financial department of the concern. Mr. Goodwin was a large, hale, comely old

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Would that our sons, who saw thee onward move  
 With step so vigorous and serenely sage,  
 Of thee might learn to practice, and to love  
 The hardy virtues of an earlier age.

For more than fourscore winters had not chill'd  
 The glow of healthful years, on lip, or cheek,  
 Nor in thy breast the warm pulsation still'd,  
 That moves with upright zeal to act and speak.  
 Ne'er from the righteous cause withheld by fear,  
 Of honest toil ashamed, nor proud of wealth,  
 But train'd in habits simple and sincere,  
 From whence republics draw their vital health.

To every kind affection gently true,  
 The husband and the father and the friend,  
 Thy children's children still delighted drew  
 Around the honor'd grandsire's chair to bend.  
 But now thy mansion hath its master lost,  
 Wrapp'd in its pleasant green, with trees o'erspread  
 And we, a patriot sire, who knew the cost  
 Of blood-bought freedom, in the day of dread.

We mourn thee, Father! On thy staff, no more  
 Thy cheerful smile shall greet us, day by day,  
 Nor the far memories of thy treasured lore,  
 Withhold the joyous listeners from their play.  
 Where stood that ancient race we fear to stand,  
 In foremost watch on life's beleaguerr'd wall,  
 To bide the battle with a feebler hand,  
 Perchance to falter, and perchance to fall.

O God of Strength!—who takest from our head,  
 Our white-hair'd patriarchs, firm in faith and truth,  
 Grant us thy grace, to follow where they led,  
 A pure example to observant youth;  
 That though the sea of time should fiercely roll,  
 We so its billows and its waves may stem,  
 As not to lose the sunshine of the soul,  
 Nor our eternal rest in Heaven, with them.

gentleman, of lively mind and cheerful manners. There was always sunshine in his bosom and wit upon his lip. He turned his hand to various things, though chiefly to the newspaper, which was his pet. His heaven was the upper loft in the composition room; setting type had for him the sedative charms of knitting-work to a country dame. I have often seen him, cheerfully swinging back and forth, as is the wont of compositors, and tossing the type merrily over his thumb into the stick, as if he were at work by the thousand ems, and had a wife and nine small children dependent upon his labors!

George Sheldon, then, was the favored clerk of this ancient and honored firm. He was happily moulded by nature, and not unkindly treated by fortune. He was short of stature, but of a bearing at once modest and manly. His large understanding and vivid imagination were duly balanced—the first being always the master, the latter always the servant. He had been well educated in the schools of the city, even to the acquisition of the common Latin and Greek classics. He had read extensively, for one of his age, and with profit. When I met him, he was twenty; I but eighteen.

It is not easy to conceive of two persons more unlike than we were at that time. Why we coalesced, can only be accounted for from the affinity of opposition—a phenomenon not unknown in the chemistry of the mind and the affections. Tall men seek short

wives; large women favor little husbands. The blonde is smitten with black eyes and raven hair; the brunette falls in love with flaxen locks and azure looks. All nature's contradictions make all nature's peace. And so a friendship, which was only terminated by the grave, grew up between myself—a raw adventurer from the country—and George Sheldon, the educated, disciplined, well-balanced graduate of the city.

## LETTER XXVI.

*My Situation under my new Master—Discontent—Humiliating Discoveries—Desire to quit Trade and go to College—Undertake to Re-educate myself.*

MY DEAR C\*\*\*\*\*

I have received your kind letter, giving your adhesion to what I have done, though counseling me to be less discursive in my narrative hereafter. Taking this in good part, and promising amendment, I proceed in my story.

I was, then, eighteen years of age, installed in a dry-goods store at Hartford, under a respectable and reasonable master. I had been sufficiently educated for my station. My parents had now removed from Ridgefield to Berlin, a distance of but eleven miles from my present residence, so that I had easy and frequent communication with them. My uncle, Chauncey Goodrich, then a Senator of the United States, lived in an almost contiguous street, and while in the city, always treated me with the kindness and consideration which my relation to him naturally dictated. In general, then, my situation was eligible enough; and yet I was unhappy.

The truth is, I had now been able to sit in judgment upon myself—to review my acquirements, to



analyze my capacities, to estimate my character—to compare myself with others, and see a little into the future. The decision was painful to the ambition which lurked within me. I had all along, unconsciously, cherished a vague idea of some sort of eminence, and this unhappily had nothing to do with selling goods or making money. I had lived in the midst of relations, friends, and alliances, all of which had cultivated in me trains of thought alien to my present employment. My connections were respectable: some of them eminent, but none of them rich; all had acquired their positions without wealth, and I think it was rather their habit to speak of it as a very secondary affair. Brought up under such influences, how could I give my heart to trade? It was clear, indeed, that I had missed my vocation.

Full of this conviction, I besought my parents to allow me to quit the store, and attempt to make my way through college.\* Whether for good or ill, I

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\* When I wrote this letter, I was living at Courbevoie, near Paris. About that time, a gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. Gilman), whom I had accidentally met in Paris, and of whom I had made some inquiries respecting certain eminent men of that State, came to visit me, and brought me several pamphlets, and among them a catalogue of Yale College, intimating that he supposed I must take an interest in the latter, as I was one of its graduates. I told him this must be a mistake, but he took the book and showed me that I was made an honorary A. M. by that institution in 1848! This, however, was the first time I ever heard of it. Thus, after all, though I never went to college, I got into the catalogue, but nearly forty years after these my youthful aspirations. I was a long time in passing my examination, and getting my degree; and if the learned gentlemen, who bestowed upon me this act of grace, had known how little of their sort of learning I really possessed, I doubt if they had ever granted to me so high a rank. Several years before, some-

know not, but they decided against the change, and certainly on substantial grounds. Their circumstances did not permit them to offer me any considerable aid, and without it they feared that I should meet with insuperable difficulties. I returned to the store, disheartened at first, but after a time my courage revived, and I resolved to re-educate myself. I borrowed some Latin books, and with the aid of George Sheldon, I passed through the Latin Grammar, and penetrated a little way into Virgil. This was done at night, for during the day I was fully occupied.

At the same time, I began—with such light and strength as I possessed—to train my mind—to discipline my thoughts, then as untamed as the birds of the wilderness. *I sought to think*—to think steadily, to acquire the power of forcing my understanding up to a point, and make it stand there and do its work. I attempted to gain the habit of speaking methodically, logically, and with accumulating power, directed to a particular object. I did all this as well by study as practice. I read Locke on the Understanding and Watts on the Mind. I attempted composition, and aided myself by Blair's Rhetoric.

This was a task, for not only was my time chiefly occupied by my daily duties, but it was a contest

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body addressed me an official letter, informing me that a similar honor had been bestowed upon me by the college at Williamstown, but I never liked to inquire about it, for fear it should turn out to be a joke. What, indeed, have my attainments to do with college honors?

against habit—it was myself against myself—and in this I was almost unaided and alone. I believe few have this experience, for most persons have progressive, methodical education. Their advance up the steep ascent of knowledge is gradual, measured step by step; and this process is performed in youth, and with the assistance of instructors, and all so gently, as to pass by without the consciousness of any great or painful effort, even by the subject of it. A person who has acquired an education in the usual way—under the steady training of teachers, from childhood to the period of graduation—does not appreciate in his feelings the amount of labor heaped up in this protracted struggle. If we consider, however, the momentum at last accumulated in the simple act of reading, for instance—the eye with electric celerity compassing every letter in a line, and the mind as quickly seizing upon every thought, mastering it, and passing on, the soul meanwhile giving to each conception its due feeling and emotion—we shall have a measure by which we may form some estimate of the magnitude of that structure in the mind, called *education*. It was a work of this sort, with the habits acquired in its formation, that I was to undo and 'do over again. It was my fortune to find that I had gone wrong, and must retrace my steps.

## LETTER XXVII.

*Hartford forty years ago—The Hartford Wits—Hartford at the present time—The Declaration of War in 1812—Baltimore Riots—Feeling in New England—Embargo—Non-intercourse, &c.—Democratic Doctrine that Opposition is Treason.*

MY DEAR C\*\*\*\*\*

The city of Hartford, ever noted for its fine situation, in one of the fertile and beautiful vales of the Connecticut, is now distinguished for its wealth—the fruit of extraordinary sagacity and enterprise on the part of its inhabitants—as well as for its interesting institutions—literary, charitable, and philanthropic. It presented, however, a different aspect at the time of which I am speaking. It had, indeed, formerly enjoyed some reputation as a sort of literary focus—it being the residence of Trumbull, the author of *McFingal*, of Hopkins, the bludgeon satirist, author of the “*Hypocrite’s Hope*,” of Theodore Dwight, and some others, known in their day as the “*Hartford Wits*.” This distinction was well deserved, for it is rare indeed that three satirical poets, of so much vigor, are found working together. It is especially rare to find them, as in this instance, united in an amicable as well as a literary brotherhood.

In my time Hopkins was dead; Trumbull had left off poetry for a seat on the bench of the Supreme Court, and Dwight was devoted to the Connecticut

Mirror—a newspaper distinguished all over the country for its vigilant and spicy vindication of federalism. His New-Year's verses were always looked for with eagerness, for they usually contained a review of events, with dashes at the times, in which the doings of democracy were painted in the unsparing colors of Hudibrastic ridicule. Many passages of these are now worthy of being read, as well on account of their illustration of the spirit of the time, as their keen and cutting satire.

On the whole, however, Hartford was then a small commercial town, of four thousand inhabitants, dealing in lumber, and smelling of molasses and Old Jamaica—for it had still some trade with the West Indies. Though the semi-capital of the State—the yearly sessions of the legislature being held there and at New Haven, alternately—it was strongly impressed with a plodding, mercantile, and mechanical character. There was a high tone of general intelligence and social respectability about the place, but it had not a single institution, a single monument, that marked it as even a provincial metropolis of taste, in literature, art, or refinement. The leading men were thrifty mechanics, with a few merchants, and many shopkeepers, society of course taking its hue from these dominant classes. There were lawyers, judges, and public functionaries—men of mark—but their spirit did not govern the town. There were a few dainty patricians, who held themselves aloof, secure of

that amiable worship which in all ages is rendered to rank. But where are they now? The answer would be a lesson and a warning to those who build their claims to homage on pretense. Such was the state of things, at the time I arrived in this city.

Some time after, a new era began to dawn, the light of which is still visible in the very air and aspect of the place. Let me give you a few measures of this striking progress. In 1810, the population of Hartford was three thousand nine hundred and fifty-five: in 1856, it is about twenty-five thousand. The American Asylum for the Deaf and Dumb, Trinity College, the Retreat for the Insane, the Wadsworth Atheneum—all excellent institutions—have been founded since my arrival in the town. The churches—then four in number—have increased to twenty-five, and by their towering and tasteful spires, give the place, as you approach it, the aspect of a Holy City. Every creed and shade of creed is represented, from Puritan orthodoxy up and down, to Roman Catholic, Second Advent, and Synagogue worshipers. There were three weekly journals, five and forty years ago; now there are two dailies, eight weeklies, and two monthlies. The manufacture of books, machines, carpets, pianos, hardware, hats, rifles, pistols—all established within forty years—now employ a capital of five millions of dollars. Colt's pistol-factory, with its accessories, is a marvelous example of ingenious art and liberal enterprise. The aggregate Bank Capital

is about six millions. The various Insurance Companies spread their protection against fire, far and wide—reaching into almost every State in the Union. Is not this progress?

I could find gratifying themes in pursuing this general train of events, especially as the prosperity of Hartford marks the general progress of society in Connecticut. But chronological propriety impels me, for the present, in a different direction. Leaving the humble path of autobiographical gossip, I must now, hackneyed as the subject may seem, take you within the wide and sweeping vortex of national history. Here, indeed, my own story leads, and here you are bound to follow. I must tell you of the war of 1812, for in this I was a soldier, and took my turn in the tented field! And besides—though we have plenty of histories on the subject, we have, so far as I know, very few pictures of the living and moving panorama of town and village life, during those three years of national anxiety and humiliation.

About midsummer in the year 1812, the news came that Congress, with the sanction of the President, had declared war\* against Great Britain.

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\* The Declaration of War was ratified by the President on the 18th of June, and the proclamation was issued the next day. The principal grounds, assigned by the President for this act, were the impressment of seamen by Great Britain, her paper blockades, unsupported by an adequate force, and various Orders in Council. *Let it be remembered that peace was made by our government in 1814, without saying a word about impressment—the main ground of the war—and that the Orders in Council were repealed within four days after our declaration of*



Sagacious men, no doubt, had foreseen this, but it came upon the mass of the people here, at the North, like a thunderbolt. I remember perfectly well the dark and boding cloud that gathered over the public mind upon the reception of the news, and this was deepened into anxiety and alarm by the tragic story of the Baltimore riot, which speedily followed. The doctrine had been announced, as well in Congress as elsewhere, by the democratic leaders, that when war was declared, opposition must cease—a doctrine which is more fit for the liveried slaves of despotism than a free people—but which democracy has since maintained to the bitter end. I invite your particular attention to this historical fact, for here is the key not only to the slanders heaped up against New England at the time, for her opposition to the war, but to the pertinacity with which they have since been urged. Even to this day, the “Hartford Convention,” “Connecticut Blue Lights,” &c., are the grizzly monsters with which the nursing fathers and mothers of democracy frighten their children into obedience—just before the elections!

It is well to remember another fact—as explaining not only events which followed the declaration of war, but some others in our history. Jefferson democracy, from the beginning, made hatred of England its chief stock in trade. This feeling, from a

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*war, and before a gun had been fired in the conflict!* For what, then did we spend one hundred millions of dollars and thirty thousand lives?

variety of causes, is indigenous to the masses of our people. It is greatly increased, as well in amount as in vehemence, by the large foreign element in our population, it being a curious fact that emigrants and refugees of all nations, come hither with an active dislike of England. Democracy at the beginning, and democracy still, avails itself of this sentiment—native as well as foreign. The main cause of the overthrow of the federalists, was, that they had to bear the burden of alleged friendship to England.

The war party perfectly well understood, and of course used, this hostility to England; and the British government, as if to make the conflict inevitable, added to the inherent fuel of popular prejudice, the flame of indignation arising from repeated insult and injury. In this state of things, the foreign population, already very numerous, exercised a powerful influence, not only in bringing on and sustaining the war, but in imparting something of their own violence to the discussions of the time. It is notorious that at this period, a large number of foreigners, with feelings lacerated by exile, and all turned into channels of hostility to Great Britain,\* held influential positions, either as members of Con-

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\* John Randolph complained that almost every leading press in favor of the war, was conducted by men who had but recently escaped from the tyranny or the justice of the British government. He gave as instances the *Aurora* and the *Democratic Press*, of Philadelphia, one edited by Duane and the other by Binns; the *Whig* at Baltimore, edited by Baptiste Irving; and the *Intelligencer* at Washington, by Gales. Foster, the British Minister at Washington when the war was declared,

gress or editors of papers, and these—co-operating with the democrats—infused into the war partisanship, a spirit of intolerance and rancor, perhaps without example in our history. It was not surprising, therefore, that riot and bloodshed should come at the beginning, or that inveterate prejudice should be perpetuated to the end.

In the city of Baltimore there was a paper called the Federal Republican, edited by a highly respectable and talented young gentleman, named Alexander Hanson. In announcing the declaration of war, this journal also announced, in terms moderate but firm, a determination to continue to speak with the same freedom as before. This was heresy, which democratic papacy deemed worthy of fire and fagot. The decree had gone forth that independence was conspiracy, and opposition was treason. The mob at Baltimore, largely composed of foreigners, in the spirit of their leaders, deemed the conduct of the editor of the Republican worthy of instant punishment. Two days after his offense—that is, on the evening of the 22d of June—an infuriated rabble, headed by a French apothecary, proceeded to his printing-office, demolished the building, and laid the

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stated soon after in the British House of Commons, that among the members of Congress who voted for the war, there were no less than six late members of the Society of United Irishmen! Randolph, in allusion to the spirit of menace and intolerance which was manifested in Congress by the war party, sarcastically suggested, more than once, that he felt himself in danger of being tarred and feathered, for expressing his honest convictions. See *Hildreth's History*, second series, vol. iii. 317.

whole establishment in ruins. Hanson, fortunately, was in the country, and his partner, though pursued, and hunted from house to house, finally escaped. The magistrates offered no opposition, and the mob, thus encouraged by tolerance and success, proceeded to wreak their patriotic vengeance in various directions, and upon a variety of objects. A suggestive specimen of their fury was manifested in burning down the house of a free negro, who had spoken in friendly terms of the British nation !

The Federal Republican was temporarily re-established at Georgetown, in the District of Columbia: after a time, however, it was removed to Baltimore,—Hanson and his friends deeming it their duty to vindicate the independence of the press, thus violently assailed. They expected a struggle, and prepared for it. They applied to the authorities for protection, but the mayor refused to interfere, and left town, doubtless for the purpose of permitting the mob to have its way. As evening approached, they gathered around the printing-office, and began the attack. Hanson was attended by Gen. Henry Lee and Gen. Lingan, both revolutionary officers, and some twenty other friends. These received the attack, the doors and windows being first strongly barricaded. Nothing, however, could resist the assailants: they burst in, and were fired upon by the defenders, one man being killed, and several wounded. The authorities now interfered, and upon an express stipulation of

protection, Hanson and his party surrendered and were conducted to prison. On their way, they were crowded upon, insulted, and threatened by the rabble. The promise of the authorities was not kept: the prison was left unguarded, the licensed mob broke in. In the confusion which followed, six or seven of the prisoners escaped: two were saved by the humanity and presence of mind of a prisoner confined for crime, and who diverted the pursuit by some ingenious fiction. The fate of the rest was horrible indeed. They were thrown down the steps of the jail, where they lay in a bleeding and mangled heap for three hours, being tortured by kicks, penknives stuck into their flesh, and hot candle-grease dropped into their eyes. This revelry was embellished with cries of "Jefferson! Jefferson!" "Madison! Madison!" and other democratic watchwords.

General Lingan expired amid these tortures; General Lee survived, but was made a cripple for life. Hanson was sent out of the city, concealed in a hay cart. One poor fellow was tarred and feathered, and carted through the city; when he fell back as if dead, the feathers were set on fire to revive him. Having committed various other similar outrages, the mob at last ceased its labors. The city authorities examined the case, and laid the blame at the door of the contumacious editor, while a Baltimore jury, without hesitation, acquitted the rioters!

The leaders of the war party, as well in their pa-

pers as in their speech, took the side of the rioters, and put the responsibility upon their victims. The example thus set and thus countenanced, was followed in various places, and especially at Norfolk and Buffalo. A spirit of menace spread over the whole country, and even at Hartford there was a ferment among the advocates of the war, which threatened to break out into open violence, against those who dared to condemn it. This rose to such a point that the authorities deemed it necessary to exercise vigilance and be prepared to meet any such contingency.

Such was the first chapter in the war of 1812; and it is, I repeat, important to be remembered, for it exhibits at once the principle and the practice of the dominant party in relation to that contest. It assumed then, as I have already stated, and it has ever maintained since, that opposition was treason. On this principle it is that democracy and its disciples have since written the history of New England at this period, and upon this have consigned her to unmitigated reproach. But partisan history is not a final judgment: truth and justice survive, and already this high court of appeal is, if I mistake not, rendering a very different verdict.

If thus the first news of the coming conflict caused a general gloom in the public mind at the North, reflection only served to deepen it. The remembrances of the war of the Revolution had not wholly passed away.



Connecticut had especially suffered by the inroads of the enemy: her towns and villages—New Haven, Danbury, Norwalk, Fairfield, New London, and others—having experienced all the horrors of massacre, conflagration, and violence. It was natural that an event which suggested a renewal of the conflict, and with the same proud and powerful enemy, should have struck deep into the hearts of the people. And besides, two-thirds of the inhabitants throughout New England, were politically opposed to the Administration which now conducted the affairs of the country, and this opposition was rendered intense by a conviction that, for a considerable period, the course of the government had been ruinous, if not hostile, to the interests of this section of the country. They were still federalists, and of the Washington type. They were for the good old way in politics, religion, and morals. They had, as I have before stated, a special dread of democracy, which had originated with Jefferson, and which—catching something of the spirit of the French Revolution, and being violently propagated in the United States by foreigners, drunk with the fanaticism of that day—was deemed by the sober people of the North as tainted with infidelity and licentiousness, threatening alike to the peace of society and the stability of our institutions.

This party, thus formed, had triumphed in the country at large, and now for twelve years had administered the government. During that period, a



series of acts—the Embargo, Non-importation,\* &c.—had been adopted, which seemed like blows aimed at New England, where the interests of the people were specially involved in commerce. In every point of view, these were deemed as having proved disastrous: not a single national object, professed to be aimed at,

\* The series of acts here alluded to, and called the “*Restrictive Measures*,” originated in the various decrees of France and England, then engaged in deadly hostilities with each other. These decrees consisted of the *British Orders in Council*, 16th May, 1806, declaring the ports and rivers of France, from Brest to the Elbe, in a state of blockade, and condemning to seizure and confiscation such vessels as violated this decree.

November 21, following, Bonaparte issued his famous *Berlin Decree*, declaring the British Islands in a state of blockade.

January 6, 1807, the British government retaliated, *prohibiting the entire coasting trade with France*. November 11, following, came the *British Orders in Council*, prohibiting all neutral nations from trading with France or her allies, except upon the payment of tribute.

December 17, Bonaparte retaliated by his *Milan Decree*, confiscating every vessel found in any of his ports which had allowed herself to be searched, or had paid the tribute demanded by England.

Thus American commerce, between these two wrestling giants, was seriously embarrassed, though, as it appears, it was not greatly diminished. The carrying trade was extensive, and our country grew rich and prosperous. Our exports were a hundred millions of dollars: our shipping a million and a half of tons. (*See Lloyd's Speech in the Senate of the United States, November 21, 1808.*) In this state of things, Mr. Jefferson astounded the country by proposing an embargo upon all shipping within the United States—the avowed object being to protect our commerce from the European belligerents. No measure could have been more objectionable to the ship-owners, in whose behalf it was ostensibly proposed. It passed into a law December 22d, 1807. This was hailed as a “magnanimous measure” by France; at first it was received with alarm by England, against whom it was really leveled. Mr. Jefferson believed that it would withhold from England our produce, and starve her into submission; at the same time, he no doubt desired to benefit France, by thus inflicting a heavy blow upon her adversary. That such was one design of the embargo was proved by supplementary acts, forbidding intercourse between the United States and the contiguous British Provinces. “How,” it was asked, “can a law which

had been attained by these measures. The sincerity of the government was, indeed, deeply questioned, for there seemed to be evidences that in professing one thing, it really sought to attain others. Despite the long indictment set forth in the Declaration of War against Great Britain, it was extensively be-

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forbids a Vermont farmer from going into Canada to sell potash, protect our shipping from being seized by the European belligerents?"

There was, perhaps, never an act of greater despotism than that of the embargo. It was not limited in time or space: it seemed universal and perpetual. It consigned to ruin and bankruptcy thousands of our citizens; it spread gloom and despair in our seaports; it left our ships rotting at the wharves; it drove our seamen into foreign service. It not only inflicted these evils upon our own country, but in some respects it benefited Great Britain, against whom it was leveled. It stimulated the British West Indians to vary their crops, and make themselves independent of our products; it enriched Canada, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick by turning into their hands the supplying of bread-stuffs and naval stores; it built up their navigation at the expense of ours; it gave to other nations the rich carrying trade of the world.

Thus this measure proved to be, in practice, as destructive as it was erroneous in principle. What would the world think of a universal and perpetual embargo on our shipping now? And it was almost as absurd in 1807 as it would be in 1856. It was, in fact, sinister as to its origin, absurd as a measure of policy, wrong in principle, and abortive in its effects. It was, nevertheless, continued in force until March, 1809, a period of nearly fifteen months, having spread poverty and ruin over great part of New England. As a substitute for this measure, a non-importation act was passed, prohibiting, for one year, all commercial intercourse with both France and England.

On the 1st of May, 1810, Congress passed an act excluding all British and French armed vessels from entering the waters of the United States; but providing, also, that if either of these nations should modify its decrees before the 3d of March, 1811, intercourse with it should be renewed. This condition was apparently complied with by France (though it afterward appeared to be otherwise), and in November it was announced by the President's proclamation. The difficulties with Great Britain, as to her blockade and Orders in Council, however, continued, and constituted one of the principal grounds of the war, as set forth in the Declaration. A few days after this declaration, however, news arrived that these acts had been repealed, on the 22d of June,

lieved that this measure had its true origin in an intrigue for the presidency.\* The people did not believe the war necessary: they did not feel that it was declared for patriotic purposes. Above all, they held that the country was in no state of preparation for such a struggle; and they doubted the fitness and capacity of the administration to carry it on with vigor and success.

These were the views of the mass of the people in New England. Nor were they alone. Many of the leaders of the democratic party were adverse to this measure; Mr. Madison, the President, believed it to be rash, and was only persuaded into it by the imperious exigency of following the war-cry of young and vaulting democracy, in order to secure his second election. Gallatin yielded to it, from a feeling of party necessity. Randolph openly and strenuously opposed it from the beginning to the end. Stephen Rowe Bradley, sixteen years a senator from Vermont, and the ablest democratic member of the Senate from New England, earnestly counseled

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and hence it was urged that the war should cease, as one of its principal causes was withdrawn. Such, however, was not the view of our government.

\* "That domination over public opinion which the war party so long manifested, &c., have conspired to shield Madison from the obloquy which must ever rest upon this part of his conduct—that of having been driven by intimidation, and seduced by personal interest and ambition, into a course of public conduct, in his own judgment improvident, if not highly dangerous."

"The same convictions were fully shared by Gallatin, and probably also by Monroe, the President's two principal cabinet officers."—*Hildreth's United States*, second series, vol. iii. p. 334.

Madison against it.\* Fifteen democratic members of Congress voted against the Declaration of War. There was, in fact, a large body of reflecting democrats in the country who did not approve of the war, though the vehemence of those who supported it kept them in silence, or perhaps forced them to acquiescence. While such was the fact as to many leading democrats, the federalists, with one voice, united in its condemnation.

If such were the objections of New England to the war, there were others of equal force to the proposed method of carrying it on. The plan of the government was to invade Canada, conquer it, and hold it as a pledge of peace. In New England, there were objections of principle, founded as well in the Constitution, as in policy and morals, against aggressive war, especially for avowed purposes of conquest. And besides, they held that the ocean, and not the land, was the true theater upon which we were best qualified to cope with the enemy.

These, I repeat, were the views of New England, by which I mean the *people* of New England—not of a few politicians and party leaders, but of the great body of the citizens—that is, the entire federal party, constituting a large majority of the voters. It is a well-known characteristic of this part of our country, that all classes read, reflect, and form opinions. These

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\* General Bradley was so dissatisfied with the war, that soon after, he withdrew altogether from public life.

give direction to politicians, not politicians to them. It is important to keep this in view; it is indispensable to the formation of a just judgment upon questions which immediately ensued, and which are matters of dispute to the present day. It will be seen that even the Hartford Convention originated with the people, and was a measure of necessity, dictated by the state of public feeling and opinion, arising from the condition of the country at large, and New England in particular.

I thus present this picture of the actual state of things at the commencement of the war, not to arraign either party as wholly wrong, or to vindicate either as wholly right. It was an era of high party excitement, and in the shock, all were doubtless forced into false positions. Yet, making due allowance for these natural and pardonable obliquities, on one side and the other, and instructed by subsequent events as recorded by history, I do not hesitate to say that these opinions of the New England people had a serious and just foundation. Opposition to the war was, therefore, not only their right, but, with these convictions, it was their duty. To have submitted to the doctrine that *opposition is treason*, would have made them unworthy of the name and privileges of freemen. That their opposition was, on the whole, as moderate in spirit and wise in form, as it was just in principle, is also my firm conviction.

## LETTER XXVIII

*Specks of War in the Atmosphere—The First Year—Operations on the Land and on the Sea—The Wickedness of the Federalists—The Second Year—The Connecticut Militia—Decatur driven into the Thames—Connecticut in trouble—I become a Soldier—My First and Last Campaign.*

MY DEAR C\*\*\*\*\*

I am not about to write the "History of the War of 1812"—though that has not yet been done. We have abundance of books under that title, but a sober and just account, rising above the party fire and smoke of that day, and above the sinister influences of this, is yet to be written.\* It is, however, a task I shall not undertake—either in these pages or elsewhere. I am writing my own recollections, and it is only as these afford glimpses of the period alluded to, that I shall notice it.

I pass over a variety of things, still in my memory: the gradual deepening of the gloom that spread over society as the events of the war drew on; the bankruptcies of merchants; the suspension of specie payments by the banks; the difficulty of getting money; the gradual withering of the resources of the people; the scarcity of a multitude of articles, alike

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\* Hildreth's History of the United States is a strong book—vigorous in its style and manly in its spirit. Its sketch of the war of 1812 is a mere outline, but so far as it goes it seems to me calculated to satisfy the reader who wishes to obtain an impartial and true view of events, and of the men that participated in them



of luxury, convenience, and necessity ; the stagnation of trade ; the impoverishment and depression of the laboring classes ; the crushing of the hopes and prospects of the young, about entering upon the theater of active and independent life : in short, that general sense of anxiety, poverty, and disappointment—which clouded nearly every brow and nearly every heart. I pass over those hells of drinking, deception, and degradation, called recruiting rendezvous. I pass over the scream of fife and tuck of drum—daily exhibited in the streets by a miserable set of young men, for the most part seduced into the army, either by artifice or liquor. I pass over the patriotic pulsations of the democracy, and the lowering disgust of federalism, as the glorious army of patriots—sometimes ten or a dozen men—led by a puffy sergeant, choking with martial ardor or a close-fitting stock, passed through our city on their way to the Conquest of Canada. I pass by Col. C . . . . .—a sample of a large part of the new army officers of that period—a raw river boatman, suddenly converted into a colonel, and strutting, with his martial cloak around him, like a new-fledged Shanghai cock. I pass by the arrival in our town of Dearborn—“ Major-general Dearborn—commander-in-chief of the American army”—a great man, and causing a great sensation, then—but “Granny Dearborn” a very short time after.

Leaving these and similar incidents entirely out of view, and taking a long leap to the close of the year



—what saith the record? General Hull had surrendered in August—less than sixty days after the declaration of war—to the British at Detroit, giving up his whole army of two thousand men, with all our forts, garrisons, and territories in that quarter. This, the direct result of mismanagement on the part of the Administration, as well in planning the campaign as in giving an important command to an imbecile officer—was the substance of the first year's operations against Canada. We just caught a Tartar—that is, the Tartar took us and our territory, instead of our taking him! General Dearborn had indeed three armies afoot—some ten thousand men, stretching along the Canada line, from Plattsburg to Michigan; and there was some fighting, but nothing effectual was done. Never was a country in a situation more humiliating than ours—a great nation, having boasted of overrunning Canada in two months—seeing its own armies beaten, baffled, and retiring ingloriously into winter quarters, before an enemy which we had covered with epithets of ridicule and contempt!

The federalists were very wicked people, and putting finger to nose, as they met the democrats, they said—"We told you so!" Now, "I told you so!" is not only a very provoking, but, in general, a very mean argument. The federalists were very wrong indeed—positively unchristian. Charity tells us to comfort the unfortunate, and to pour balm into the wounded heart. The federalists did no such thing

Oh, how the Connecticut Mirror, in the hands of Theodore Dwight, did cast its arrows, right and left, at the war and its authors! Poor "Jim Madison:" poor "Granny Dearborn!" It was indeed very, very provoking, very improper.

While thus failure and disgrace attended our operations upon the land, light broke in upon us from the ocean. On the 19th of August, three days after Hull's surrender, another Hull—the gallant Commodore—met the *Guerrière*, and it was ours. Again the wicked federalists said—"We told you so! that's our thunder." This was true enough. The federalists had built up the navy: Jefferson and his party had opposed it. The federalists had urged that—if we must go to war—the strength of the country should be put into ships, and that we should meet the enemy upon the sea. "Not so"—said democracy—"we will take Canada!" It was very provoking of Commodore Hull to capture the *Guerrière*, for it gave aid and comfort to the enemy—these black-hearted federalists! However, other commanders followed Hull's example. On the 18th of October, Capt. Jones, in the *Wasp*, took the British sloop-of-war *Frolic*; and on the 25th of the same month, the fierce and fiery Decatur, in the frigate *United States*, captured the British frigate *Macedonian*. In December, Bainbridge conquered the Java, after a fearful conflict. "Hurra for the navy: we told you so!" said the black-hearted federalists.

Such was the first year of the war: the campaign of 1813 opened upon a wider and more varied field. Among its incidents upon the land, were the disastrous operations of Winchester, at Frenchtown—which clothed all Kentucky in mourning for its gallant sons, fallen in battle; our capture of York, in Canada, costing the life of the lamented Pike; Harrison's effective resistance at the siege of Fort Meigs; the battle of the Thames, and the death of the great Indian chief, Tecumseh—important events, leading finally to the recovery of Detroit. To these were added the retirement of General Dearborn—the President insisting he was sick, while the general, not taking or not relishing the joke, insisted that he was never better in his life; the succession of Wilkinson as commander-in-chief—soon, however, to be superseded and tried by court-martial for his blunders and failures; the magnificent attempt to take Montreal, and its equally magnificent abortion; and finally, late in the year, the bloody and desolating ravages by the British, of Buffalo, Black Rock, Lewiston, &c., &c., in revenge for our burning the Canadian village of Newark, by which we turned four hundred helpless people out of doors in midwinter. Thus the year, which had presented some brilliant instances of courage and conduct, closed in general disappointment and humiliation, so far as our land operations were concerned. “We told you so!” said the wicked federalists, and many a democratic ear tingled at the gibe.

Yet light again—with some sad and disheartening hadows—came from the sea. On the 21st of February, Captain Lawrence took the Peacock, but on the 4th of June following, gave up his life on the deck of the Chesapeake—captured by the Shannon—bequeathing, however, to his country the glorious motto, worthy of all great occasions—"Don't give up the ship!" On the 14th of August the American Argus quailed to the British Pelican; in September, the British Boxer became the prize of the American Enterprise. A greater triumph was at hand. On the 10th of this month, Perry met the enemy on Lake Erie, and "they were ours!" It was indeed a glorious victory; the entire British fleet—two ships, two brigs, one schooner, and one sloop—falling into our hands.

"We told you so: that's our thunder!" said the exultant but provoking federalists. "It is our thunder, too!" said the democrats. "Hurra for the navy!" said both parties. "Here's to Hull and Decatur and Jones and Biddle and Bainbridge, and all the rest!" said everybody. There was one point of union at last, and so it was to the end of the war. The little navy had conquered democratic prejudice, and fought itself into national favor. It was indeed a glorious thing—saving the honor of the country, tarnished by imbecility and disaster upon the land, and teaching a wise lesson as to the true policy to be pursued, in case of future conflict with any European enemy: *let us meet them upon the sea!*

I must not omit an episode of the war at this period, in which I was concerned. On the first of June, 1813, Commodore Decatur, in the United States, attended by the Macedonian and the sloop-of-war Hornet, having passed from New York through the Sound, attempted to get out to sea by way of Montauk Point. Here they were met by the British fleet, under Commodore Hardy, and driven into the Thames at New London. The enemy's force was soon increased by the arrival of other ships of war, and these, anchoring off Gull Island so as to block up the port, seemed to threaten a speedy attack. Great panic immediately ensued, as well at New London as along the borders of the Sound. The specie of the banks in that city was removed to Norwich, and the women and children dispersed themselves among the interior towns and villages. No adequate means of defense existed along the line of the New England coast—seven hundred miles in extent. The regular troops had nearly all been marched off to invade Canada. The general government had, furthermore, called upon the New England States to place a portion of the militia at their disposal for this object. This had been refused on several grounds: one was, that the Constitution provided only three contingencies, in which the militia could be lawfully placed under the command of the President, and these were, *to repel invasion, suppress insurrection, and execute the laws.* Neither of these emergencies existed in **the**

present case. Another ground of refusal was, that the coasts, being left defenceless, the retaining of the militia was a measure dictated by every consideration of prudence. Still another objection was, that the general government had so organized and distributed the national forces, as to make the militia fall under the command of the army officers—a principle always resisted by the country, in every period of its national history. On the whole, the government scheme, in respect to the militia, was regarded, and very justly, as analogous to the systems of conscription in the military despotisms of Europe, and—if once tolerated and passed into practice—as alike hostile to our principles and threatening to our liberties. The fear of seeing our freedom fall before some ambitious military leader, had prevailed in the convention which framed our Constitution, and it was this which had induced that far-seeing body to circumscribe the power of the President, in regard to the militia, within the clear and narrow limits already mentioned. Prudence and patriotism alike dictated, in the present instance, that this great bulwark of liberty should be maintained.

These, fortunately for the country, were the views of the New England States at this period, and upon these they acted. There was then and has been since, much clamor by the war party against their conduct in this instance, but every lover of his country should render homage to the wisdom and patriotism of those



leaders who guided the councils of New England, at this crisis. The question was then settled, and doubtless settled forever, that by no artifice can the system of conscription, giving unlimited command over the militia to the President, be consummated. The rule of the Constitution, in this respect, has been confirmed, as not only a principle in theory, but as a rule of practice.

I remember the discussions on this subject which took place at the North, during this period. Besides the objections already mentioned against placing the militia at the disposal of the President—and besides the general hostility of the people to sending their sons forth for the avowed purpose of conquest—there was another motive, and a very active one, tending in the same direction. The new army officers, with some honorable exceptions, were held in very light esteem, as well personally as professionally. *Almost without exception, the appointments were bestowed upon partisans of the President.* Many of the officers were notoriously unfit for the places given to them.\*

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\* This was certainly the case in New England, and I know of no circumstance in the whole conduct of the war, that operated so powerfully as this, to destroy the confidence of the people in the government, and to exasperate them against it. Many of the officers, especially those of the lower grade, had no qualifications for the places they filled but their democracy. This was pointed out to the President: he was advised that if he would commission certain persons of the federal party, who were conspicuous for their military qualifications, and who were also willing to receive commissions, that it would do more than any thing else to break the opposition to the war. This he declined, saying that the offices belonged of right to those who supported his administration, and besides, that he should disgust his own party by such a course.



Dearborn especially was well known in New England, and was regarded as wholly incompetent to the responsible command devolved upon him. Hull's surrender, Dearborn's failures, and Wilkinson's abortions, justified and increased this general want of confidence in the new army appointments. Even if other objections had not existed, the people would have revolted at the idea of sending their sons to perish ingloriously along the Canadian borders, under the direction of incompetent commanders, *appointed on merely partisan principles*.

But now a new state of things had arisen in Connecticut: our own territory was threatened. For this, the State government had made wise preparation, and on their part there was no hesitation.\* It was midsummer—a period when the husbandmen could

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\* Party vehemence has represented that the New England States, at this period, not only opposed the war by words but by deeds; that in fact they were prepared to go over to the enemy. Nothing could be more untrue. Whatever might be the political opinions of the federalists, when the war was declared, Great Britain was regarded as an enemy. I can affirm, that, although I was in the very midst of the "old federalists" of Connecticut, I never heard a word fall from the lips of any one of them, expressive of an opposite sentiment. I no doubt caught the feelings of those around me, and I am conscious of having always felt, through the war, that the British were our national enemies. The records of Connecticut prove, conclusively, that this idea was as strongly entertained by the government of that State as by the general government itself. The following are extracts from the doings of the legislature, in their extra session, called in August, 1813, in consequence of the declaration of war; and the conduct of the State was in accordance with these views.

"War, always calamitous, in this case portentous of great evils, enacted against a nation powerful in her armies, and without a rival on the ocean, can not be viewed by us but with the deepest regret. A nation

ill afford to leave their farms : so orders were sent by Governor Smith\* to dispatch at once the companies of militia from the larger towns to the defense of New London, and the neighboring country. At that time I belonged to an artillery company, and this was among those ordered to the coast. I received a summons at four o'clock in the afternoon, to be ready to march the next day at sunrise. I went at once to consult

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without fleets, without armies, with an impoverished treasury, with a frontier by sea and land extending many hundred miles, feebly defended—waging a war, hath not first 'counted the cost.'

"By the Constitution of the United States, the power of declaring war is vested in Congress. They have declared war against Great Britain. However much this measure is regretted, the General Assembly, ever regardful of their duty to the general government, will perform all those obligations resulting from this act. With this view, they have at this session provided for the more effectual organization of the military force of the State, and a supply of the munitions of war. These will be employed, should the public exigencies require it, in defense of this State, and of our sister States, in compliance with the Constitution ; and it is not to be doubted, but that the citizens of this State will be found, at the constitutional call of their country, among the foremost in its defense."

\* Roger Griswold was Governor at the time the war was declared, but in October, 1812, during the session of the legislature, he died at his residence in Norwich. John Cotton Smith, then Lieutenant-governor, became acting governor, and the next April was elected Governor of the State. Roger Griswold was born at Lyme in 1762 : having graduated at Yale College, he devoted himself to the law, and soon rose to eminence. In 1794 he was elected to Congress, where he continued for many years, being a leader of the federal party. Mr. Webster once told me that he considered him one of the most accomplished parliamentary debaters our country has produced. During his time there was an Irishman in Congress from Vermont, named Matthew Lyon, of whom the poet Honeywood thus sings :

"I'm rugged Mat,  
The Democrat—  
Berate me as you please, sir ;  
True Paddy-whack,  
Ne'er turn'd his back,  
Nor bow'd his head to Cæsar."

my uncle—who, by the way, was at that time not only mayor of the city, but Lieutenant-governor of the State. He had a short time before promised to make me one of his aids, and perhaps thought I should expect him now to fulfill his engagement. He soon set that matter at rest.

"You must of course go," said he. "We old federalists can not shelter our nephews, when there is a question of defending our own territory."

"Ought I not to consult my parents?" said I.

I will go down and see them to-morrow," he replied.

"Certainly then I shall go: I wish to go: my only feeling is that my mother may have some anxiety."

"I will see her to-morrow: you may be at ease on that subject. Be ready to march at sunrise, according to your orders. I will come and see you before you start."

The next morning, while it was yet dark, he came, gave me letters of introduction to Judge Brainard, father of the poet, Judge Perkins, and General Williams. He also supplied me with ten dollars, a welcome addition to my light purse. After a little advice, he said—"I have only one thing to add—if you come to a fight, *don't run away till the rest do.* Good-by!"

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This man, one day, spit in Griswold's face in the Representatives' Hall, and as the democratic majority refused to punish him, Griswold gave him a severe beating with his cane. This was the first of those indecent brawls which have disgraced our national assembly.

The next morning—June 7, 1813—about sunrise, the whole company, nearly sixty in number, mounted in wagons, departed. At sunset, we were on the heights, two miles back of New London. No provision had been made for us, and so we went supperless to bed, in a large empty barn. I scarcely closed my eyes, partly because it was my first experiment in sleeping on the floor, and partly because of the terrific snoring of a fellow-soldier, by the name of C . . . , who chanced to be at my side. Never have I heard such a succession of choking, suffocating, strangling sounds as issued from his throat. I expected that he would die, and indeed once or twice I thought he was dead. Strange to say, he got up the next morning in excellent condition, and seemed, indeed, to feel better for the exercise. This man became quite a character before the campaign was over: he got the title of *Æolus*, and as he could not be tolerated in the barracks, he was provided with a tent, at a good distance, where he blew his blast without restraint. I need only add, that, at the close of the campaign, he was the fattest man in the company.

I was glad to see the daylight. The weather was fine, and as the sun came up, we saw the British fleet—some half dozen large ships of war—lying off the mouth of the Thames. They seemed very near at hand, and for the first time I realized my situation—that of a soldier, who was likely soon to be engaged in battle. I said nothing of my emotions: indeed,

words were unnecessary. I watched the countenances of my companions as they first caught a view of the black and portentous squadron, and I read in almost every bosom a reflection of my own feelings. We were, however, not all sentimentalists. There were among us, as doubtless in all such companies, a supply of witty, reckless Gallios, who gave a cheerful turn to our thoughts. We soon dispersed among the inhabitants, scattered over the neighboring hills and valleys, for breakfast. Like hungry wolves, we fell upon the lean larders, and left famine behind. Of course every one offered to pay, but not one person would accept a farthing: we were, indeed, received as protectors and deliverers. It was something, after all, to be soldiers! With our stomachs fortified, and our consciousness flattered, we came cheerfully together.

At ten o'clock, we were mustered, and began our march, all in our best trim: cocked hats, long-tailed blue coats, with red facings, white pantaloons, and shining cutlasses at our sides. Our glittering cannon moved along with the solemnity of elephants. It was, in fact, a fine company—all young men, and many from the best families in Hartford. Our captain, Johnson, was an eminent lawyer, of martial appearance, and great taste for military affairs. He afterward rose to the rank of general. Mosely, the first-lieutenant, was six feet four inches high—a young lawyer, nephew of Oliver Wolcott—and of high social

and professional standing. Screamed the fife, rolled the drum—as we entered New London! The streets presented some confusion, for still the people were removing back into the country, as an attack was daily expected. A few military companies were also gathering into the town. We were, however, not wholly overlooked: women put their heads out of the windows, and smiled their gratitude as we passed along. Men stopped, and surveyed us with evident signs of approbation. Louder screamed our fife, deeper rolled our drum, and the glorious music echoed and re-echoed—bounded and rebounded—from the reverberating walls of the streets. It was a glorious thing to belong to such a company! At last we came to a halt in one of the public squares. Then there was racing and chasing of aid-de-camps, in buff and feathers, for four mortal hours, during which our martial pride wilted a little in the broiling sun. At four o'clock in the afternoon, we were transported across the Thames, to the village of Gorton, and took up our quarters in a large house, on the bank of the river, vacated for our use. Two immense kettles—the one filled with junks of salt beef and the other with unwashed potatoes—were swung upon the kitchen trammels, and at six o'clock in the evening we were permitted each to fish out his dinner from the seething mass. That was my first soldier's supper; and after all, it was a welcome and relishing meal.



## LETTER XXIX.

*Description of New London—Fort Trumbull—Fort Griswold—The British Fleet—Decatur and his Ships in the Thames—Commodore Hardy—Letters from Home—Performances of the Hartford Company—Fishing—A few British Broadships—Apprehensions of an Attack—Great Preparations—Sober Second Thoughts—On Guard—A Suspicious Customer—Alarm, alarm!—Company called out—Expectations of instant Battle—Corporal T's Nightmare—Consequences—Influence of Camp Life—Return to Hartford—Land Warrants—Blue Lights—Decatur, Biddle, and Jones.*

MY DEAR C\*\*\*\*\*

I must attempt to give you an idea of our position, as now established in our barracks. New London, as you doubtless know, is situated on the western bank of the River Thames, three miles from its mouth. It has now ten or twelve thousand inhabitants, but at the time I am speaking of, there were not more than four thousand. The entrance to the river is broad, and affords a fine harbor. This is defended by Fort Trumbull on the western side of the river, half a mile below the city. It was commanded, at two several periods, by my grandfather, Colonel Ely,\* during the Revolutionary war, but was then a place of little strength. It fell into disrepair, but had been

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\* "Dr. John Ely, of Lyme (1776), performed a tour of duty here as captain and major, and also as physician and surgeon. In July he was sent to visit the northern army, and employ his skill in arresting the small-pox, which was then raging in the camp with great virulence."—*Caulkin's History of New London*, p. 521. Colonels Latimer, Ely, &c., performed tours of duty, with their respective regiments, at New London and Groton, 1777.—*Ibid.* p. 526.



rebuilt, and contained a garrison of six or seven hundred soldiers during the war of 1812. It has recently been reconstructed on an ample scale, and is at present one of the most complete of our fortifications, mounting eighty heavy guns, and having accommodations for eight hundred men.

Opposite to New London is the village of Groton, the main street running along the river bank ; on an eminence some hundred rods from the river, and commanding a view of the surrounding country, including the harbor and the islands which lie scattered near it in the Sound, is the site of Fort Griswold—the scene of one of the saddest tragedies in our revolutionary annals. Here is now a monument one hundred and thirty feet in height, erected by the State, in commemoration of this event. The old fort is, however, in ruins, though a small attached battery, lower down, and more suited to effective defense of the harbor, has been rebuilt. In my time, Fort Griswold was in tolerable repair. Our company, as well as other portions of the militia, labored upon it, and strengthened it, as well by completing its works as by erecting a small redoubt upon the southeastern side. To the defense of the latter, in case of attack, the Hartford company was assigned.

About a week after our arrival, over a thousand militia, gathered from various parts of the State, were stationed along the river, chiefly on the eastern bank. Decatur had drawn his three ships up the stream as

far as possible, some twelve miles from its mouth, and near the city of Norwich. Here the river is reduced to three hundred feet in width, and flows between high rocky banks. On one of these, called Allyn's Mountain—commanding a wide view even as far south as the harbor—light intrenchments were thrown up, being deemed an effectual defense against any attack likely to be made by the enemy.

The British squadron had been for some time on the coast. As early as April, Commodore Hardy, in the flag-ship *Ramiles*, with the *Orpheus* and other vessels, having erected their standard on Block Island, cruised in this quarter. The people of New London, who had hitherto remained sheltered from the war, were now suddenly reminded of the British fleet which came hither under the vindictive Arnold\*

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\* Long Island Sound, and its shores on both sides, were the scenes of active and stirring events during the Revolutionary war. This sheet of water, as well as Long Island itself, and the city of New York at its western extremity, were for a long time in the possession of the enemy. Large British fleets were often seen sweeping through the Sound, and always carried terror into the towns and villages of Connecticut along the northern shore. On the 5th of September, 1781, a fleet of thirty-two vessels, of all classes, conveyed to New London a force of about two thousand men. These were landed the next day, and marched upon the town. All was panic and confusion among the inhabitants. Colonel Ledyard, with such means as could be mustered, took his station at Fort Griswold. A force of twenty-three men at Fort Trumbull—which was only a battery for defense toward the water, and open behind—on the approach of the enemy, fired a volley, and crossed the river to Fort Griswold. Arnold, amid random shots which did some execution, entered the town. The work of destruction then commenced. The torch was applied, and a long line of fire soon enveloped the place. Shops, stores, houses, vessels, wharves, boats, rigging, were enveloped in smoke and flame. Hogsheads of sugar and rum, and tubs of butter were knocked in, and the flames, seizing upon the alcohol and grease, ran

thirty years before, and left behind him an imperishable remembrance of outrage and infamy.

The British commander, Hardy, conducted with the utmost courtesy and humanity, but still there was a feeling of uneasiness along the shore. This was deepened into anxiety and alarm, on the arrival of Decatur and his ships, and the consequent gathering of the British forces around the harbor, as if for at-

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in rivers of fire along the gutters of the streets. Arnold was born near this place, and was well acquainted with it. He used his information to effect the destruction of the best parts of the city, and nearly all its stores of merchandise, &c.

On the other side of the river a deeper tragedy was being enacted. Colonel Eyre had been dispatched against Fort Griswold with two British regiments. The fort itself was an oblong square, with bastions at opposite angles—its long side fronting the river. Its defenders, under Colonel Ledyard, were but one hundred and fifty men. About noon the enemy made their attack in solid column. They were at first received with a few deadly volleys, and then by a quick, steady, destructive fire. Both attack and defense were firm and determined. The men within seemed each a hero. The two British commanders fell. But the enemy at last conquered by numbers. They marched in, and Col. Ledyard ordered his men to throw down their arms. A few, however, in one of the bastions still resisted. This irritated the British, and they continued their deadly fire from the parapets, even upon the surrendered Americans.

At last, the British major, Bromfield, on whom the command had devolved, entered, and demanded, "Who commands this fort?" "I did," said Col. Ledyard, "but you do now." At the same time, he presented his sword, in token of submission. The ferocious commander took the weapon and plunged it in the owner's bosom! At the same moment the attendants rushed upon the prostrate and bleeding victim, and dispatched him with their bayonets. The work of butchery then went on against the survivors. At last the enemy departed, leaving eighty-five Americans dead, and about thirty-five regarded as mortally wounded—having first stripped them, and then leaving them exposed to the broiling sun. More than half this butchery took place after the surrender. A small number, who survived, were taken away as prisoners.

Such was the desolating expedition of the traitor, Benedict Arnold,

tack. When we arrived, the squadron consisted, I think, of two ships-of-the-line, two frigates, and a number of smaller vessels. There was, however, a constant movement among them—the force being frequently diminished, and as frequently augmented. These changes were the occasion of constant alarm along the shore, and scarcely a day passed that we had not some rumor of a meditated attack.

Such was the state of public affairs on the surface. As to myself, I was soon drilled into the habits of a soldier. I had been permitted to go to New London and deliver my letters of introduction. I received letters from home, and in one of these, from my father, which I have preserved, I find the following passages :

“ We hope you will pay very exact attention to your conduct and behavior, while you are a soldier. You have our prayers for your welfare and that of your comrades. Study to ingratiate yourself with them, by your kindness, and especially with your officers, by your cheerful obedience to their orders. We

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against New London. It adds to the horror, inspired by such details, to know that he was accompanied by a large number of Americans, who, however, had joined the British, and thus came to aid in the work of death, ruin, and despair. Such is war. The next day, the ships, having received the troops, departed, leaving a dreadful scene of havoc and desolation behind them. New London was, indeed, little better than a ruin.

The memory of this event, and the natural hatred consequently inspired by the British name, still lives here and in the neighborhood. The anniversary of the massacre at Groton fort was long celebrated with sad solemnities. A lofty monument now points to heaven, in protest against the crime it records. Such deeds never die, and the world is dotted all over with them—too many perpetrated by men who bore the British name. Is this the explanation of the general dislike of Great Britain, throughout the civilized world ?

hear that there is an additional British force arrived within a few days. How long they will think it worth while to keep up the blockade at New London, is uncertain: they will not, at any rate, consult our convenience. We are in hopes the British will make no attack upon New London, and that you will not be called into a conflict with them. But we must leave this to the overruling of a merciful God, as also the issue, should he permit such an event. Should you be called to engage with them, I hope and trust that you will do your duty, and defend your country, which is just and right, though it may not be so to engage in offensive war.

“I wish to remind you, my dear son, of the necessity of being prepared for death, at all times and by all persons. This is specially important to a soldier. This will arm you with courage to meet whatever God shall call you to experience. It is no evidence of courage for persons to rush into danger in a thoughtless or wicked manner; it is a better and surer courage which rests upon a deep sense of duty, and which always keeps the soldier ready to die at any moment—even at the beat of the drum.”

There, my dear C . . . , is a specimen of old Presbyterian, Blue Light, Hartford Convention Federalism, during the “late war!” It was good doctrine then, and it is good doctrine now: good to live by, and good to die by. At all events, as this letter came from home, and told me of the welfare of my friends; as it came also with a large bundle of tea, sugar, dried beef, and other things, with several pairs of stockings, mended up by my mother, and abundance of messages and good wishes, and sundry letters and scraps of letters—it put me in good heart, whether for peace or war. Who would not be a soldier, if

thereby he becomes the object of such sympathy? Fortified by this aid and comfort,\* I could cheerfully have gone to fight the British, or anybody else - "where duty called me."

The officers of our company were rigid disciplinarians, and accordingly we were drilled for about four hours each day. We soon gained much reputation for our martial exercises and our tidy appearance. Many people came over from New London to witness our performances. Among these were often persons of distinction. On two occasions, Decatur, Biddle, and Jones came to see us, and complimented us very heartily. On Sundays, we marched two miles to church. Being in our best guise, we caused quite a sensation. Men and women, boys and girls, streamed along at our flanks, often in a broiling sun, yet always with admiring looks.

After the morning drill, we were generally at leisure for the rest of the day, taking our turns, however, on guard, and in other occasional duties. Most

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\* Among the letters alluded to, was the following :

HARTFORD, June 12, 1818.

MY DEAR SAMUEL :

I had the pleasure to receive yesterday your letter by Mr. Whiting. I am happy to be informed of your health, and that you have the good fare of a soldier : whatever it may want of the delicacies of the luxurious table of the citizen, will be made up to you in the zest you will have when you return to it. The principal thing you have to attend to is the care of your health, and that also you will best learn, as we do every thing, by experience. Your father will be here to-day. We are all well. Write by every opportunity.

Your affectionate uncle,

CHAUNCEY GOODRICH.



of the soldiers gave up their rations of mess beef and potatoes, and lived on their own resources. We formed ourselves into a general club for a supply of fresh fish. Every day three of us went out fishing, and generally returned with a half-bushel basketful of various kinds, among which the blackfish or tautaug—now so greatly esteemed—was always abundant. I was employed by the captain to keep his journal of our proceedings, and sometimes I was dispatched to New London, or to some one of the officers along the line, with a letter or a parcel. I established a friendly acquaintance with old Mrs. Avery, who kept a supply of excellent bread and butter, milk and eggs. I visited Fort Trumbull, and the blockaded fleet up the river. Frequently I strolled into the country, and now and then went to see “Mrs. Bailey,” who even at that early period was a celebrity of Groton. I have never seen such fierce democracy as in this village, fed, as it doubtless is, upon the remembrance of the British massacre at the fort; and Mrs. Bailey was filled with its most peppery essence. The story of the flannel petticoat\* was then

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\* When Decatur took refuge in New London harbor, the inhabitants of Groton were thrown into great alarm. At this moment a messenger was sent to Fort Griswold for flannel, to be used for the cannon. Most of the portable goods had been sent away, and the messenger was unsuccessful, until he met Mrs. Anna Bailey, who instantly took off her flannel petticoat and heartily devoted it to the patriotic cause of defense. It was carried to the fortress, and displayed on a pike. The story being told, the garrison cheered, and the “martial petticoat” became almost as celebrated as Mahomet’s breeches. The story went over the whole



recent, but it had marked her for immortality. All the soldiers went to see her, and she sang Jefferson and Liberty to them with great spirit. Once a soldier talked "old federalism" to her, by way of jest: whereupon she got up, and holding out her petticoat, danced and sang Jefferson and Liberty at him, as if that were sufficient to strike him dead.

I remember that on one occasion H.... A...., my special companion, and myself, were sent with a letter to a lieutenant, who commanded a small picket on the eastern shore, near the mouth of the river—that is, at Point Groton. It was a distance of some three miles. The weather was pleasant, and our route lay along the shore of the stream, which opens into a wide bay, as it meets the Sound. As we approached the southern point of the shore, we found ourselves quite near to the British squadron. One of the vessels, which we knew as the *Acasta*\*—for we had learned all their names—was under full sail in a light wind, and coming up toward the shore. She was already so near that we could see the men, and note every movement on the deck. While we were admiring the beautiful appearance of the ship, we suddenly saw several white puffs issue from her sides,

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country, and when General Jackson (then President) came to New London, he visited this lady. She is said to have given him a very demonstrative reception. She died January 10, 1851, aged 92 years.

\* This ship was noted for her beauty: she was in fact the belle of the fleet, and was said to have been built for the Duke of Clarence, who served in the navy till he became admiral, and was afterward King of England, under the title of William IV.

and uncoil themselves into volumes of smoke. Then came a deafening roar; a moment after, and in the very midst of it, there were wild howls in the air, above our heads. At a little distance beyond, the ground was plowed up, scattering the soil around, and the top of one of the forest trees, of which a few were scattered here and there, was cut asunder, and fell almost at our feet.

We understood the joke in an instant, and so did the lieutenant who commanded the picket. He was the object of the attack, and the broadside of the *Acasta*, sending its shot over our heads, had hurled one or two balls crashing through the roof of the little fish-hut, which he and his men occupied. In less than five minutes, they were seen trotting off at a round pace, with their cannon, jerking right and left, over the rough ground behind them. Several other shots were given, but the party escaped in safety. My companion and myself ensconced ourselves behind the rocks, and though it was grave sport, we enjoyed it exceedingly. We could trace the cannon-balls as they flew by looking like globes of mist, twinkling through the air. Several of them passed close over our heads, and grooved the earth, in long trenches, at our sides. The noise they made, as they rose high in the air, was a strange mixture, between a howl and a scream. After having thus showed her teeth, and made a great noise, the frigate returned to her anchorage, and all was quiet. I hope I shall not de-

grade myself, as a soldier, in your eyes, by confessing that this was the only battle in which I was engaged during this glorious war !

I must, however, mention one circumstance, which tried the souls of our company. Let me premise that, on a certain Saturday, a large accession to the British force arrived in the bay, the whole number of vessels, of all kinds, amounting to fourteen. This looked very much like an attack, and accordingly there was a feverish anxiety among the inhabitants of New London and the vicinity, and a general bustle in the army, from Groton Point to Allyn's Mountain. A large body of militia was set to work upon Fort Griswold. Our company was drilled in the little redoubt which we were to defend, and every preparation was made to give the enemy a warm reception. The general idea was, that a landing of British troops would be made on the eastern side, and that we should take the brunt of the first attack.

The sun set in clouds, and as the evening advanced, bursts of thunder, attended by flashes of lightning, muttered along the distant horizon. Our company were admonished to sleep on their arms. Every thing wore a rather ominous appearance. There were no signs of cowardice in the men, but they looked thoughtful ; and when Bill W . . . , the laureate wit of the company, let off some of his best jokes—which would ordinarily have set the whole corps in a roar—he was answered by a dead silence. It chanced

that I was that night on guard. My turn came at ten o'clock. Taking my gun, I paced the bank of the river, back and forth, in front of our barracks. I had received orders to let nothing pass, by land or water. It was intensely dark, but at frequent intervals, thin flashes of lightning sprang up against the distant sky, behind dark rolling masses of clouds.

Gradually the lights in the streets and windows of New London, stretching in a long line on the opposite side of the river, were extinguished one by one, a few remaining, however, as sentinels, indicating anxiety and watchfulness. The sounds on all sides were at last hushed, and left the world to darkness and to me. More than half of my two-hours' watch had passed, when I heard the dip of oars and the flapping of waves against the prow of a boat. I looked in the direction of the sounds, and at last descried the dusky outline of a small craft, stealing down the river. I cried out—"Boat ahoy! who goes there?" My voice echoed portentously in the silence, but no answer was given, and the low, black, raking apparition glided on its way. Again I challenged, but there was still no reply. On went the ghost! I cocked my gun. The click sounded ominously on the still night air. I began to consider the horror of shooting some fellow-being in the dark. I called a third time, and not without avail. The rudder was turned, the boat whirled on her heel, and a man came ashore. According to my orders, I marshaled him to the guard-

room, and gave notice of what had happened, to the captain. The man was only a fisherman, going home, but he was detained till morning. So, you see, I **can** boast that I made one prisoner. My watch was soon over, and returning to my station, I laid down to sleep.

All was soon quiet, and I was buried in profound repose, when suddenly there was a cry in the main barrack-room, overhead—"Alarm! alarm!"

"Alarm! alarm!" was echoed by twenty voices, attended by quick, shuffling sounds, and followed by a hurried rush of men down the staircase. A moment after, the guard in front discharged his musket, and was answered by a long line of reports, up and down the river, from the various sentinels extending for half a dozen miles. Then came the roll of drums, and the mustering of the men. Several of our company had been out to see what was going on: they came back, saying that the enemy was approaching! J. M. . . . distinctly heard the roar of cannon, and positively saw the flashes of muskets. B. W. . . . found out that the attack had already begun upon our southern pickets. Nobody doubted that our time had come!

In a very few minutes our company was drawn up in line, and the roll was called. It was still dark, but the faint flashes gave us now and then a glimpse of each other's faces. I think we were a ghostly looking set, but it was perhaps owing to the bluish complexion of the light. J. S. . . ., of West Hartford, who

marched at my left shoulder—usually the lightest-hearted fellow in the company—whispered to me, “Goodrich, I’d give fifty dollars to be at West Division!” For myself, I felt rather serious, and asked a certain anxious feeling in my stomach—“What’s to be done?” I thought of my father’s letter, and my uncle’s injunctions, and having settled it in my mind that I must fight, I closed my thoughts against all consequences, and felt that I was ready for the conflict. I was indeed almost anxious to have it come, as the suspense was painful. I afterward found, on conversing with several members of the company, that very similar trains of thought had occurred to them. Johnson, our captain, was a man of nerve and ready speech. When the roll was finished, he said in a clear, hearty tone, “All right, my good fellows! Every man at his post!” These few words—which were, however, more politic than true, for one fellow was taken with sudden colic, and could not be got out—were electrical. We were ready to take our places in the redoubt.

Messengers were now sent to the two neighboring posts to inquire into the state of facts. Word was brought that the first alarm came from our barracks! The matter was inquired into, and it turned out that the whole affair was originated by our Corporal T . . . , who, in a fit of nightmare, jumped up and cried, “Alarm! alarm!”

Our martial ardor soon reconciled itself to this rather ludicrous denouement, though several persons,

who had been somewhat chapfallen, became suddenly inflated with courage, which signalized itself with outbursts of—"D—— the British!" "They're a pack of sneaking cowards, after all!" and the like. The next morning was fresh and fair. The skirmishing thunder-gusts of the night had cleared the air, and even distant objects seemed near at hand. Before us lay the whole British fleet, still and harmless, in the glassy bay. My left-hand chum, J. S . . . , who, in the dark hour, would have given fifty dollars to be at West Division, was now himself again. "Come on here, you black old Ramiles!" said he—dashing the doubled fist of his right hand into the palm of his left: "come on here, you black-hearted British bull-dogs, and we'll do your business for you!" &c.

Notwithstanding our military duties, you will readily comprehend that we had a good deal of leisure. For the most part, this idle time was wasted, or worse than wasted. The atmosphere of a camp presents a fearful ordeal for all, but more especially for the young soldier. The restraints of society being withdrawn, the seducing and corrupting influences which naturally spring up and riot in such a soil, too often lead captive the strong as well as the weak. The military spirit is opposed to reflection: it is reckless, banishes thought, and teaches a kind of self-abandonment. Our officers set an excellent example, and there was less of degradation in our company than in others. Still, among us, there was a general reading



of bad books, a great deal of petty gambling, and not a little tippling. It was easy to see, week by week, the gradual wearing away of the sense of propriety, of gentlemanly tastes, and general conservatism, in at least one-half the young men of our company. A similar declension was visible throughout the whole body of militia along the line. My own conviction was and is, that military life is exceedingly degrading, and especially to militia, who are suddenly called away from the usual safeguards of virtue, and exposed to new and unexpected seductions.

Fortunately our period of service was brief. In about six weeks from the time of our departure, we were dismissed, and returned to our homes. Thus closed my military career, so far as relates to active service. The remembrances of my first and last campaign are, on the whole, pleasant. There were feelings of fraternity established between the members of the company which have continued to this day, save only in regard to those which the grave has sundered. My country has not been unmindful of my services; for I have received two land-warrants—giving me a title to some hundred and sixty acres—with the fresh virgin soil of the Far West upon them. Say not that republics are ungrateful!

A few words more, and this chapter is done. You have doubtless heard about the "Connecticut Blue Lights," and of course conceive the term to imply some ignominious stain upon the reputation of this,

the "land of steady habits." You will expect me, therefore, to tell you the story of its origin.

The preceding pages have shown you that Decatur, commanding the American frigate *United States*, after a brief and glorious career upon the ocean, subsequent to the declaration of war, had been driven into the Thames with his prize, the *Macedonian*, and the sloop-of-war *Hornet*. Here they were all cooped up, like strong men bound hand and foot. You can readily imagine the effect of such a situation upon a person like Decatur. He was—as all the world knows—of an ardent and impetuous temperament—impulsive, impatient, irascible. No man was ever less qualified to endure the protracted and inglorious idleness of his present position. He was high-hearted, patriotic, proud of the navy: he was ambitious, and panted for glory. His bleeding country needed his services: his fellow-officers of the navy were lighting the face of the ocean in both hemispheres with their brilliant exploits. He was imprisoned, and with him three noble ships. How then must he have panted to be free!

I have told you that I saw him on several occasions. He was rather below the middle size, but of a remarkably compact and symmetrical form. He was broad-shouldered, full-chested, thin in the flank: his eye was black, piercing, and lit with a spark of fire. His nose was thin, and slightly hooked: his lips were firm, his chin small, but smartly developed. His

whole face was long and bony ; his complexion swarthy ; his hair jet black, and twisted in ropy curls down his forehead and over his ears. Altogether he was a remarkable looking man, and riveted the attention of every one who saw him. By the side of the quiet, thoughtful Jones, and the dark, handsome, complacent Biddle—his fellow-prisoners—he seemed like a caged eagle, ready to rend in atoms the bars which restrained him.

Decatur did not conceal his impatience : his ill-humor rendered him unjust. He was not chary in his speech, and in fact he made himself many enemies by the freedom and vehemence with which he expressed his political opinions. Certainly he and the citizens of New London were heartily tired of each other. The latter were indeed most anxious to get rid of him and his squadron, inasmuch as their presence in the Thames brought upon the inhabitants all the dangers, anxieties, and miseries of war.

That Decatur should desire to escape, and that he should have the co-operation of all the people of New London, heart and hand, would seem to be matters of course. At last he resolved to make the attempt. In October he began, gently and quietly, to drop down the river, and by the last of November was in the harbor of New London. On the night of the 12th of December all things were prepared, and the vessels were about to depart, in the hope of eluding the blockading squadron in the darkness.

Now note the ominous fact: at different times, from eight to ten o'clock in the evening, blue lights were thrown up, apparently from the land, along the shore, and on both sides of the river. Decatur assumed, at once, that these were signals, sent up by traitorous Americans, announcing to the enemy his intended departure. So positive was the conclusion, that he totally suspended his operations, and from that time made no further efforts to escape. He wrote a letter, giving an account of the affair, and did not scruple to charge the assumed treason upon the people of New London! That letter—unjust, untrue, and absurd as it was—passed into the history of the time, and party rancor, seizing upon the slander, has continued to use it to the present day. *Blue Lights*, meaning treason on the part of Connecticut federalism during the war, is a standard word in the flash dictionary of low democracy.

Now, let me make one or two suggestions. Be it remembered, that, from the beginning, Decatur was mainly indebted to the federalists of Connecticut for protection: the general government had no force sufficient to keep the enemy at bay, when he sought shelter in the Thames. His presence there brought expense, anxiety, gloom, upon the State. It involved the people of New London in every species of vexation, disquietude, and danger. How absurd, then—how contrary to all logic—to accuse them, or any of them, of attempting to prevent his departure, which,

above all things, was what they desired! Nothing but the obliquity of a mind diseased by disappointment, can excuse such a charge, made in the face of such plain and palpable contradiction.

But what were these blue lights? Now you must understand that I had left New London in July, and these events occurred in December. Yet while I was there, blue lights, and indeed lights of various other colors, were often seen, apparently along the shore; and it was generally understood that these were signals thrown up from the British ships, or perhaps from parties of the enemy cruising in boats among the islands, or going ashore on the main land. It was impossible, in most cases, to determine whether these came from the land or the water :\* at all events,

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\* This fact has recently been recalled to my mind by the venerable Dr. S. H. P. Lee, now in full practice at New York, at the age of eighty-four! His house in New London commanded a view of the harbor and the shipping. He frequently saw blue lights all along the shore, and confirms the fact that it could not be determined, in most cases, whether they came from the sea or the land. They were always attributed to the British. He conceives that the charge of treason, on the part of Decatur, was entirely untrue and in fact absurd.

Dr. Lee informs me, that from their position, the British had no difficulty in knowing every thing that was going on along the shore. There was no rigid police: the British sailors often went ashore among the fishermen, as well on the islands as the main land: the officers not unfrequently went in disguise to New York, and even into the interior. After the peace, a ball was given to Admiral Hotham—then commander of the station—and his officers, at New London. Dr. Lee and his two sons there recognized, among the British officers, two persons, who, during the war, were passing along the street, and at his invitation stepped up into his piazza and took a look at the squadron! Of course every movement of Decatur's was known to the enemy, and as he lay in New London harbor, he was under the eye of their telescopes. They no doubt penetrated his designs, and seeing him about to make an effort to escape, sent

they were very common. They were always attributed to the British, and excited no particular interest. They were regarded only as telegraphs of the enemy, which, in general, they and they only could read.

Now, there is not one particle of evidence that these blue lights, seen by Decatur, were in any respect different from the others, familiar to everybody living in New London. They were never traced, even by suspicion, to any individual. There is no proof that they came from the land; and even if they did, they might still have come from British parties ashore. Or, if they were the work of traitors—Americans—these were isolated individuals, and their conduct would have been held in abhorrence by the whole people. To charge it, then, upon the inhabitants of New London—to attempt thus to stain the character of a city, and indirectly a whole State—was one of those acts which should have excited the indignation of every honorable mind.

I need only add, that I have never met an individual, living in New London at the time, who did not consider this imputation as absurd in itself, and

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up their blue-light telegraphs to direct the various ships to be upon the alert. While such an interpretation is probable, to say the least, it is oad logic to impute treason, and at the same time the most absurd acts of contradiction to their own interests, to the people of New London.

I give this testimony of Dr. Lee with the more readiness, as he is historically known for his courageous and beneficent professional conduct, in braving, alone, the horrors of the yellow fever at New London in 1799—when every other physician, not prostrated by the disease, had fled from it in terror. Surely such evidence should be conclusive.

as having no foundation, except in the warped and excited imagination of Decatur. I believe every member of the Hartford company—and they had good opportunity to judge of the matter—regarded it in this light. It was a wrong act on his part, and those who desire to cherish his fame—which after all is one of the glories of our country—should admit that it was an error, and do what they may to repair it. Those who seek to make the scandal live, only perpetuate the memory of the injustice which originated it.\*

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\* Stephen Decatur was born on the eastern shore of Maryland, Jan. 5, 1779. In 1798, he entered the navy as midshipman: twice he proceeded to the Mediterranean, and in February, 1804, he recaptured and burnt the American frigate *Philadelphia*, in the harbor of Tripoli, then in the hands of the enemy. This exploit has always been regarded as one of the most successful acts of skill and daring on record. In an attack on Tripoli, the following August, he captured two of the enemy's vessels, performing feats of personal courage and strength, the story of which reminds us of the fabled achievements of knight-errantry. His praise was on the tongue of all his countrymen. He superseded Commodore Barron, in the command of the *Chesapeake*, after the shameful attack of the *Leopard* upon that vessel; he then became commander of the frigate *United States*, and in October, 1812, captured the *Macedonian*, as elsewhere stated. His squadron remained at New London till the close of the war, but he was appointed to the command of the *President*. On attempting to get to sea, in January, 1815, he was captured by two British vessels, and carried into Bermuda. In February, the war being over, he returned to the United States. Being dispatched with a squadron to the Mediterranean, he soon chastised the Algerines, and compelled them (June, 1815) to sign a treaty, abandoning their piracies, and liberating those of our countrymen whom they held in captivity. He was made one of the Navy Commissioners in November, and took up his residence at Washington. In 1819, he had a long correspondence with Commodore Barron, which issued in a challenge by the latter. The meeting took place at Bladensburg, March 22, 1820. At the first fire Decatur was wounded, and being carried to his house, died that night in the presence of his distracted wife. Deep emotions of admira-



## LETTER XXX.

*Continuation of the War—The Creeks subdued—Battles of Chippewa and Bridgewater—Capture of Washington—Bladensburg Races—Humiliation of the President—Defense of Baltimore—The Star-spangled Banner—Ravages of the Coast by the British Fleet—Downfall of Napoleon—Scarcity of Money—Rag Money—Bankruptcy of the National Treasury—The Specie Bank-note, or Mr. Sharp and Mr. Sharper—Scarcity and exorbitant Prices of British Goods—Depression of all Kinds of Business—My Pocket-book Factory—Naval and Land Battle at Plattsburg—Universal Gloom—State of New England—Anxiety of the Administration—Their Instructions to the Peace Commissioners—Battle of New Orleans—Peace—Illuminations and Rejoicings.*

MY DEAR C\*\*\*\*\*

I must lay aside, for the present, my own personal history, that I may complete this hasty sketch of the war. I now approach the last year—that of 1814—which happily closed the inglorious struggle.

Merely noticing important events, I remark that the Creek war, conducted on our part by General Jackson, and ending in a complete humiliation of the savages, early in this year—however it abounded in striking incidents—made little immediate impression upon us at the North, partly because the theater of operations was remote, and partly because it was over-

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tion for his character, and horror at the folly of the last act of his life, pervaded the whole community.

Commodore Jacob Jones was born in Delaware, 1770. After a brilliant professional career, he died at Philadelphia, August, 1850.

Commodore James Biddle was born at Philadelphia, 1783. He distinguished himself as a commander, and also in some diplomatic services in Turkey and China. He died in 1843.

shadowed by the more important struggle with Great Britain. The battles of Chippewa and Bridgewater, in July, displaying gallant deeds on the part of our troops—officers as well as men—everywhere excited lively demonstrations of sympathy. I think the success of our arms was always cheered, even by the federalists—the feeling of national pride, and the real hostility to Great Britain, triumphing over party feeling.

When the news came that—August 24th—the city of Washington had been invaded, captured, desolated—the President and his cabinet having actually fled like a flock of sheep—there was a deep, burning sense of indignation and shame: indignation, at the want of forethought, courage, and conduct on the part of the national executive; and shame, at the humiliating spectacle we presented to the world—we who had begun the war in boasting, now seeing our officials disgraced by pusillanimity, and our capital desecrated by the presence and occupation of an enemy! I shall let this humiliating page in our history pass, with the simple remark, that the feeble and cowardly President seems on that occasion to have drunk deep of the bitter cup of humiliation, in recompense for having bartered the peace of the country for the poor bauble of a second term of office. The future has, doubtless, some instructive light to shed upon this passage of our national history.\*

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\* Whoever wishes to see a detail of the facts in this case will find them in Hildreth's *United States*, second series, page 507. There was

A few weeks after the capture of Washington, the British troops, led by General Ross, landed at North Point, fourteen miles from Baltimore, and immediately commenced their march toward the city. They were met by the American militia, and in a skirmish, the British general was killed. The enemy advanced the next morning as far as the defenses of that place, hastily thrown up by the Americans; here they made several threatening demonstrations, but such was the firm and formidable front of the Americans, that the next morning they silently withdrew, and speedily embarked on board their shipping. While the British were marching on Baltimore, the fleet advanced up the Patapsco, and bombarded Fort McHenry nearly a whole day and night. The gallant and effectual defense of that fortress, gave rise to the beautiful national song of the "Star-spangled Banner."\*

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a feeble attempt at defense, at Bladensburg, five miles from Washington; but the United States troops as well as our militia fled upon the first fire of the enemy. The President and his secretaries dispersed in like manner. This scampering was satirized under the name of the "Bladensburg Races." Madison and his wife found refuge in a Maryland farm-house, where they spent two days and three nights of mortification, alarm, and insult from the irritated inhabitants. After a short time the enemy departed: another party of them, however, had made their way to Alexandria, where they compelled the inhabitants to sacrifice all their merchandise and all their shipping to save the city. Madison returned to Washington, and in order to hide his disgrace, laid all the blame to Armstrong, the Secretary of War. The latter retaliated, asserting that the President yielded to the "humor of a village mob, stimulated by faction and led by folly."

\* The author of this admired national lyric was Francis Scott Key, of Maryland, born August 1, 1779. He became a lawyer, and was Dis-

As summer advanced, the clouds seemed to thicken over our country on every side. The coasts of New York and New England were kept in a constant state of anxiety and alarm, by British squadrons sweeping our shipping from the sea, and occasionally making descents upon the land. The treasury of the United States was exhausted,\* and the government

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trict Attorney of the city of Washington, where he died, January, 1843. He wrote several songs, though not for publication, as he seems not to have duly appreciated them. To feel the full force of the *Star-spangled Banner*, it is necessary to know its origin. A gentleman of Baltimore had gone to the British fleet with a flag of truce, in order to get a friend of his released, who had been captured at Marlborough. He was not permitted to return, as he might give information of the intended attack upon Baltimore. While thus on board a British vessel, he witnessed the attack upon Fort McHenry during the whole day. When night set in, the flag, which still floated, was hidden from his view. The bombardment was kept up, and his heart was agitated with the most anxious fears. As the morning rose, he had the unbounded satisfaction of seeing the banner of his country still flying aloft, in evidence of successful defense. The whole story is admirably told in the song.

\* The state of the treasury, as presented to Congress by Campbell, the Secretary, in Sept. 1814, was deplorable. The last attempt to borrow six millions had only produced offers for half that amount, and these at the rate of eighty per cent. The credit of the government was indeed almost gone: specie had disappeared; the banks had generally suspended specie payments; the currency consisted of bank notes, at a large depreciation. The treasury was in fact empty, and large debts and expenses were accumulating and soon to be met. Every kind of scheme was suggested for supplying the exhausted and discredited treasury—new loans, increased taxes, various kinds of government stocks, and finally a national bank. Dallas, Secretary of the Treasury, proposed a non-specie paying bank, and Calhoun a specie-paying bank. Neither of these two plans succeeded. The Bank of the United States, which had so remarkable a career, and was finally extinguished by Gen. Jackson, was chartered April 10th, 1816, the plan having been framed by Secretary Dallas. It was in fact rather a democratic institution; the federalists at that time seeming to foresee the evils which followed, strove earnestly to reduce the capital of thirty-five millions to twenty millions, but without avail.

seemed on the point of bankruptcy. And more than all—Napoleon had fallen, and on the 4th of April had departed for his exile at Elba; the allies had triumphed—Great Britain, the mistress of the sea, the leading power of the world, was now free to turn her whole power against us in America. She was exasperated by the feeling that we had declared war against her, with the design of aiding her great enemy at the very time she was struggling for self-preservation against nearly all Europe, which he had combined against her. Already the veterans who had triumphed under Wellington, were collecting in Canada, and the ships, long occupied in the European war, were crowding hither, like vultures, eager for their prey. Dismay spread along the whole maritime frontier, where the inhabitants, no longer placing any reliance upon the general government, which seemed totally paralyzed, were all up in arms, mustering and drilling with one hundred and twenty thousand militia in the field. Portland, Boston, Providence, New Haven, New York, Baltimore, Richmond, Norfolk, Charleston, Savannah, were busy in throwing up fortifications.\*

I remember perfectly well, the universal state of anxiety and depression which prevailed in New England at this time. The acts of government, the movements of fleets and armies, furnish no idea of the con-

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\* Hildreth, second series, vol. iii. p. 524.

dition of society in its daily life. Let me give you a few items as indications of the embarrassments, vexations, and privations which the war had brought unto every man's house and home. Such a thing as silver or gold money was almost unknown. The chief circulation consisted of bills of suspended banks, or what were called "facilities;" that is, bank-notes, authorized by the legislature of Connecticut, redeemable in three years after the war. These were at fifteen to twenty-five per cent. discount compared with specie. Banks issued notes of fifty, twenty-five, and twelve-and-a-half cents. Barbers put out bills, payable in shaving, and various institutions adopted a similar course. This whole mass acquired the title of "rag money," "shin-plasters," &c. : a large portion of it was notoriously worthless, either as being counterfeit, or issued by irresponsible parties, yet it generally passed without scrutiny. I recollect a person at a turnpike-gate offered a five-dollar bank-note, and received in change a large, greasy wad of bills, of various names, hues, and designs. He glanced at it, and said to the keeper—"Why, half of this is counterfeit!"

"I know it," was the reply; "but it passes just as well as any other."

A specie bank-bill\* was almost an object of worship. An anecdote will illustrate this. In our city of H....

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\* The New England banks continued to pay specie, but their notes were rare. The bills of suspended banks of the Middle States and "facilities," constituted the chief money in circulation.

there were a shrewd man and a greedy man, who had some dealings with each other about these days, when the following scene occurred :

*Shrewd Man.* Do you recollect giving me a ten-dollar bill in change yesterday, Mr. C . . . ?

*Greedy Man.* No, I don't : why do you ask ?

*S. M.* Well, I found a specie bill of ten dollars in my purse, and I thought, perhaps, I might have received it of you. You remember I was only entitled to a facility, and not to a specie bill ?

*G. M.* Well, I dare say you had it of me : let me see it.

*S. M.* There it is !

*G. M.* Oh yes ; I recollect it perfectly. I'll take it, and give you a facility. There !

*S. M.* Are you sure, Mr. C . . . , that you gave me that specie bill ?

*G. M.* Certainly, certainly : I recollect it distinctly.

*S. M.* Well, I'm glad you are sure, for *they tell me the specie bill is counterfeit !*

At this period, all kinds of British merchandise had become very scarce, and many had entirely vanished from the market. There was a small supply of certain articles, from time to time, furnished by the vessels captured by our ships and privateers, and some convenient and necessary goods were smuggled in from Canada. There was, in fact, a large amount of money—and this was all specie—sent to the British Provinces for pins, needles, jewelry, laces, muslins,



cambrics, chintzes, silks, sewing-silk, buttons, &c., &c. These merchandises were so costly that a man would frequently carry the value of a thousand dollars in a pair of saddlebags, sometimes on his shoulders, and sometimes on horseback. The life of the smuggler along the line, at this period, was one of danger and adventure. In some instances, persons laid the foundations of future fortune in this illicit traffic. I recollect very well the prices at which we sold some of these articles: calico, now worth twelve and a half cents, readily brought seventy-five cents the yard; cotton-cambric, now twenty cents, then a dollar; linen handkerchiefs, now fifty cents, then two dollars; fine broadcloth, now five dollars, then twelve, or even fifteen dollars. The average prices of British goods, at retail, were about four times what they are now.

In point of fact, however, our dry-goods trade was almost destroyed. Domestic products were enormously dear—flour at one time eighteen dollars a barrel—at Boston! I had personal experience of the universal depression. In the summer of 1814, I was out of my time, and cast about for some employment. I went to New York for this object, but found not the slightest encouragement. After some reflection, I established a manufactory of pocket-books, in connection with one of my friends, J. S. S. . . . , who furnished the capital. The greatest difficulty was to find the materials. I made expeditions to Boston, Charles-

ton, Providence, &c., and was not able to obtain over fifty pieces of morocco fit for the purpose. In December I went to New York, and was more successful. I had made a considerable purchase, and dispatched my goods by the wagoner, for you will remember that Long Island Sound was in the occupation of the enemy.\* Pretty well content with my success, I had gone in the evening to a concert at the City Hotel. While listening to the music, there was a murmur in the streets. Soon the door of the concert-room was thrown open, and in rushed a man all breathless with excitement. He mounted on a table, and swinging a white handkerchief aloft, cried out—

“Peace ! Peace ! Peace !”

The music ceased : the hall was speedily vacated. I rushed into the street, and oh, what a scene ! But, I beg your pardon, I have not yet done with the war !

Amidst general gloom and despondency, a broad ray of light came suddenly from the north—the general scene of disaster and disgrace. In the spring of this year, General Wilkinson was superseded by General Izard, but while the latter, with the flower of the American army, was drawn off toward Sackett’s Harbor, the British general, Provost, advanced across the country toward Plattsburg, situated on the western side of Lake Champlain. Hitherto the enemy’s

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\* Freight from New York to Hartford, now fifty cents a hundred, was then four dollars a hundred.

force in this quarter had been small, but now, replenished by the veterans who had fought in the Peninsula under Wellington, and who had seemed invincible, he mustered twelve thousand men. Macomb, the American commander, left with only three thousand regular troops, was soon reinforced by three thousand militia from Vermont and New York. He was strongly intrenched behind the Saranac—which flows through Plattsburg to the lake—and here the enemy assailed him. The British fleet, under Commodore Downie, came gallantly on to their assistance: Macdonough,\* commander of the American squadron, now closed with them, and then came such a fight as is seldom seen. It was a deadly action of more than two hours—ship to ship, broadside to broadside. At last the enemy was silenced—victory was on our side. Nearly the whole British fleet was captured. This was decisive of the conflict in this quarter. Simultaneously with the naval attack, the land forces of the enemy had advanced against the Americans under Macomb. But the defeat of the naval

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\* Thomas Macdonough was a native of Delaware, and was born in 1784. When the battle of Lake Champlain was fought, he was but twenty-eight years of age. In commemoration of his victory, the citizens of Hartford presented him with a splendid sword. I recollect the occasion, and the appearance of the gallant officer. He was nearly six feet high, very broad-shouldered, with a small head, but finely set, so as to give a look of mingled dignity and elegance to his form. His hair was light, almost flaxen, his eye gray, and his countenance mild, but with an expression of firmness. In his personal character, he was marked with gentleness and dignity. His private life was most blameless. He died in 1825.

force disheartened them, a panic ensued, and under cover of a storm, they hastily retreated, leaving behind them their sick and wounded, and a part of their baggage and stores. Their whole loss was estimated at no less than two thousand five hundred men! This double victory—Sept. 11, 1814—was indeed some compensation for the disgrace inflicted upon us a few weeks before at Washington.

The clouds of despondency, however, still lowered over our country, in its length and breadth. It is now known that the Administration was deeply alarmed at the perilous condition into which it had brought the country. The humbled and dismayed President, in his message to Congress in September,\* evidently thinking no more of conquest, was solely occupied with the means of self-preservation. But however painful the condition of other parts of the United States, New England, beyond all question, was exposed to peculiar and trying difficulties. Her preparation for the war had been a series of destructive acts on the part of the government, which had spread general poverty throughout her entire territories. Commerce, which was then her life, had nearly perished under embargoes and non-intercourse acts, to

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\* "It is not to be disguised," said he, "that the situation of our country calls for its greatest efforts. Our enemy is powerful in men and money, on the land and on the water. Availing himself of fortuitous advantages (the triumph over Napoleon), he is aiming, with his undivided force, a deadly blow at our growing prosperity, perhaps at our national existence." This is from a President who had declared war, a short time before, with the expectation of conquering Canada!

which had now been added three years of war.\* And in this condition she had been left by the general government without defense, having a coast of seven hundred miles exposed to the enemy. That enemy, in the full triumph of his arms over Napoleon, was gathering his forces along the northern frontier, and spreading his navies over our waters, and in the very sight of our seaports. Already portions of our territory were in his possession, and our towns and villages were not only exposed, but some of them had been actually subjected, to ravage and plunder.

There was evidently no hope but in the people themselves. The general government had abandoned them: it is historical, and beyond dispute, that while the policy of the Administration allowed and encour-

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\* It is startling to look back at the financial records of the country at this time: the destructive effects of the embargo are abundantly attested by documentary evidence. The exports of the United States in 1807—that is, before the embargo—were \$108,343,558; in 1808, under the embargo, they were \$8,417,000—a diminution of a hundred millions in a single year! The whole loss to the United States in the destruction of commerce, alone—during the seven years of embargo, non-intercourse, non-importation, and war—all forming one system, under Jefferson and Madison democracy, would show a fearful sum—amounting to hundreds of millions. To this is to be added the war expenses, the depreciation of property, the wide-spread devastation of productive enterprise, &c., &c. Let it be understood that New England, from her position, took more than her relative share of this burden; let it also be understood that she believed all these measures to have had a sinister origin; let it, furthermore, be held in view, that events, thus far, had fulfilled her predictions as to the destructive tendency of this whole policy; and then we may be prepared to ask whether she had not a right to call together her Wise Men, as had been her custom from the foundation of the first settlements, to take into consideration the state of public affairs, and recommend the means of averting the evils which impended over her?

aged the democratic governors of several States to call out the local militia for defense, permitting them to have their own officers and paying the expenses thus incurred, a totally different system was adopted in respect to the federal States of New England. Here the general government insisted upon the exclusive control of military movements, and flatly refused paying the militia, because they were not placed under the command of United States officers. What was then to be done? This was the anxious question in city, village, and hamlet, from one end of the country to the other. The people—the great body of the people—were agitated with a deep sense of injury, of suffering, of anxiety. In this state of things, a project was suggested, in the good old Puritan county of Hampshire, in Massachusetts, which resulted in the Hartford Convention. It had been the custom, from time immemorial—in days of doubt and danger—for the inhabitants of the Pilgrim land to call together their wise men, to seek, by counsel and co-operation, the path of duty and deliverance. The history of New England tells us that, on almost every page. Had they not a right to do so now? Was it not natural for them to take this course—to follow the example of their fathers? Is it fair, is it just, is it reasonable, to seek any other motive than this, which lies open and plain upon the face of things, with nothing to contradict it?

I have a few more words to say on that subject,

but I lay them aside for the present, that I may complete my chronological memoranda of the war. This done, I will give you my recollections of that famous or infamous assembly.

It was now evident to the whole country that we had changed positions with the enemy. At the outset, the war was aggressive on our part: we had sought to invade and conquer a portion of his territory: in this we had failed, and now released from his embarrassments, he was threatening us on all sides, thus calling upon us for defense. It appears that the Administration now felt the absolute necessity of bringing the war to a close. Great Britain had made an offer to treat for peace, and our government accepted it, appointing J. Q. Adams, Henry Clay, Jonathan Russell, Albert Gallatin, and J. A. Bayard, as Commissioners for that object. The instructions at first given, required them to insist upon a withdrawal of the pretensions of Great Britain to the right of search and impressment—the only substantial object of the war. After the news of the prostration of Napoleon, other instructions were given, directing that even this should not be insisted upon. The agents of the two governments met at Ghent, in Belgium, in August. As we had withdrawn every material obstruction, a treaty of peace was finally agreed upon and signed, at Ghent, Dec. 24, 1814.

The news of this event did not reach the United States until the 11th of February, 1815—a space of



forty-nine days—for then steam navigation had not brought the Old and New World within ten days' sail. While the tidings of peace were thus lagging across the Atlantic, the war still lowered over our country. It was soon apparent that the enemy meditated a blow at some portion of the Southern States. At length, after various movements, and some severe encounters with our forces under General Jackson, the British general, Packenham, advanced against the American intrenchments, four miles below New Orleans, with a force of twelve thousand men. Their design evidently was to capture New Orleans. Behind their breastworks of bales of cotton, six thousand Americans, mostly militia, awaited the attack. It came, but our well-aimed cannon and deadly rifles mowed down the enemy like a scythe. The plain was speedily covered with the dead and the dying. General Packenham was killed, and his successor, Gibbs, was mortally wounded. The British troops—most of them veterans, and conquerors in many a bloody field—were panic-stricken, and fled. The loss on their side was seven hundred killed and one thousand wounded: the loss on ours was seven killed and six wounded! The Saxon had met the Saxon: the American rifle had triumphed over the British bayonet. It was on our part a glorious victory; but let it be remembered, that it was in defense of our territories—our homes and firesides. The moral of the war is well told in its opening and

closing scenes : in attempting conquest, our flag was humbled at Detroit ; in self-defense, it became immortal at New Orleans !

This great victory on the part of General Jackson—which afterward carried him into the presidential chair—took place on the 8th of January, 1815—fifteen days after the signing of the treaty of peace. The rumor of this triumph had reached Washington, and began to raise the drooping spirits of the country ; but a still more cheering event was at hand. As I have already stated, the news of the treaty of peace arrived in New York on the 11th of February, 1815. It was about eight o'clock on Saturday evening, that the tidings circulated through the city. I have told you that I was there. In half an hour after the news reached the wharf, Broadway was one living sea of shouting, rejoicing people. "Peace ! peace ! peace !" was the deep, harmonious, universal anthem. The whole spectacle was enlivened by a sudden inspiration. Somebody came with a torch : the bright idea passed into a thousand brains. In a few minutes, thousands and tens of thousands of people were marching about with candles, lamps, torches—making the jubilant street appear like a gay and gorgeous procession. The whole night Broadway sang its song of peace. We were all democrats, all federalists ! Old enemies rushed into each other's arms : every house was in a revel : every heart seemed melted by a joy which banished all evil thought

and feeling. Nobody asked, that happy night, what were the terms of the treaty: we had got peace—that was enough! I moved about for hours in the ebbing and flowing tide of people, not being aware that I had opened my lips. The next morning I found that I was hoarse from having joined in the exulting cry of peace, peace!

The next day, Sunday, all the churches sent up hymns of thanksgiving for the joyous tidings. I set out in the stage-coach on Monday morning for Connecticut. All along the road, the people saluted us with swinging of hats and cries of rejoicing. At one place, in rather a lonesome part of the road, a schoolmaster came out with the whole school at his heels to ask us if the news was true. We told him it was: whereupon he tied his bandanna pocket-handkerchief to a broom, swung it aloft, and the whole school hosannaed—"Peace! peace!" At all our stopping-places, the people were gathered to rejoice in the good tidings. At one little tavern, I looked into a room, by chance, the door being open, and there I saw the good wife, with a chubby boy in her lap—both in a perfect gale of merriment—the child crying out, "Peath! peath!" Oh, ye makers of war, reflect upon this heartfelt verdict of the people in behalf of peace!

We arrived at New Haven in the evening, and found it illuminated: the next day I reached Hartford, and there was a grand illumination there. The news

spread over the country, carrying with it a wave of shouts and rejoicings. Boston became clamorous with pealing bells; the schools had a jubilee; the blockaded shipping, rotting at the dilapidated wharves, got out their dusty buntings, and these—ragged and forlorn—now flapped merrily in the breeze. At night the city flamed far and wide—from Beacon-street down the bay, telling the glorious tale even unto Cape Cod. So spread the news over the country, everywhere carrying joy to every heart—with, perhaps, a single exception. At Washington, the authors of the war peeped into the dispatches, and found that the treaty had no stipulations against Orders in Council, Paper Blockades, or Impressments! All that could be maintained was, that we had made war, charging the enemy with very gross enormities, and we had made peace, saying not one word about them! Madison and his party had in fact swallowed the declaration of war whole, and it naturally caused some uneasy qualms in the regions of digestion. “Let us, however,” said they, “put a good face upon it: we can hide our shame for the moment in the smoke of Jackson’s victory; as to the rest, why we can brag the country into a belief that it has been a glorious war!” Madison set the example in a boasting message, and his party organs took up the tune, and have played it bravely till the present day.

But what saith history—not partisan history, not  
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history addressed to Buncombe, not history written in subservient demagogism to national vanity—but history, speaking the truth and fearing not? What saith the record?\*

Assuredly this, that the war had its origin in partisan interests, and was carried on in a similar spirit; that it was the war of the Administration, and not of the nation, and so far was disastrous and disgraceful. It was begun without preparation, it was carried on in weakness; it was characterized by failure, it was terminated by a treaty which left us where we began—save only that a hundred millions of dollars and thirty thousand lives had been expend-

\* I commend to the reader the following observations from a calm and sober writer:

“An inquiry here naturally suggests itself—as, after the revocation of the British Orders in Council, Impressment was the only grievance to be redressed by war; and as that question was subsequently waived by our government in the negotiation, *what was gained by the war?* It has been considered as no small point gained, that ample evidence has been given to Great Britain of our capacity successfully to resist her power, especially upon the ocean, where she had long claimed a vast superiority; and that a guarantee had thus been furnished against future aggression. It is questionable, however, if the result could have been known, *or if the unbiased counsels of our older statesmen had prevailed, whether war would have been declared.* Jefferson, Madison, Gallatin, Macon, and others, were of a pacific disposition. The leading men of the administration were known to have given a reluctant sanction to the war project; but they found themselves under a kind of necessity to yield to the impulsive young politicians—Calhoun, Clay, and a number of others—who, it was suspected, were striving to turn the popular prejudices against Great Britain to their own political advantage. Whether the nation has ever obtained an equivalent for the thirty thousand lives, and the hundred millions of money expended; for the loss of property and of several years of prosperous commerce; for the depravation of the public morals, and the train of other evils inseparable from a state of war, is a question which at least admits of a reasonable doubt.”—*Young's American Statesman.*

ed in the inglorious struggle. All the lights of this period belong to the people or to the opposition—all the shadows to the war-makers. Hull's surrender, Dearborn's blunders, Wilkinson's abortions, were the work of the Administration, attempting the conquest of Canada: the desecration of Washington is wholly chargeable to the personal weakness and pusillanimity of the President and his cabinet. The glory of the navy belongs to the federalists, who were its fathers—the democrats being its open and avowed enemies and opposers: the victories of Plattsburg, Baltimore, and New Orleans, belong not to the spirit of Madison, who would conquer Canada, but to that spirit which is indigenous to the country, to the people—democrats and federalists—everywhere—who will fight and conquer in defense of our soil, even though the war be brought upon us by a feeble and unpatriotic government.

Let us be frank, and confess the truth: the war, in the aspects in which history thus presents it, was disgraceful to the authors of it: it was, in many respects, disastrous to the country; and yet it has left us some wholesome lessons. It has shown the danger and folly of plunging a great country into a national conflict, for narrow and selfish purposes, because—under such circumstances—the people will be divided, and it will be a partisan and not a patriotic war; it has put on record another instance in which war has been declared in boasting, and ended precisely where it be-

gan, after years of violence, sorrow, and bloodshed ; it has shown our weakness in a war of conquest, and our strength in a war of defense ; it has shown us that the sea is the true theater upon which we should ever be prepared to attack and repel every European enemy. It has shown us that without preparation, and with divided counsels, we are weak, but that with union of heart and proper precautions, we need not fear any combination the world can bring against us. It has shown, also—in connection with subsequent events—the superiority of peace to war, even in obtaining the ends of justice, for let it be remembered, that Daniel Webster extorted from Great Britain by the force of argument, that which the sword could not achieve. His letter to Lord Ashburton\* silenced, and doubtless forever, the British pretensions to the “right of search”—thus demonstrating the superiority of an old federal quill, to all the gunpowder that mere Madison democracy could command ! The pen is master of the sword.

And now, my dear C . . . , I ask you in all serious-

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\* This remarkable letter—dated Washington, August 8, 1842—will be found in Mr. Webster's Works, vol. vi. p. 318. Mr. Everett says, in his memoir of Mr. Webster, “The reply of Lord Ashburton must be considered as acquiescence on the part of his government ;” that is, acquiescence in the American doctrine of maritime rights—that the flag of a country renders the decks of its ships inviolable against visit or search. The London Times, Standard, &c., about this period, expressed the opinion that this subject was finally put to rest by Mr. Webster's letter. It is understood that Lord Aberdeen said to Mr. Everett, that its argument was unanswerable : it has been effectively answered, however, by quietly yielding to its doctrines.



ness—is it not time for that arrogance to cease—which claims for democracy all the patriotism, all the success, all the glory of the war of 1812, and charges upon federalism a uniform course of secret or open treason, with the responsibility of all the failures, disasters, and disgraces which attended the conflict?

Let me observe, by the way, that I do not condemn the feelings of the great body of the democrats, in their support of the war. Believing it to be just and proper, their ardor, their patriotism, their perseverance in the maintenance of the struggle, were honorable to them. I do full homage to their spirit, to their patriotism. I can overlook that partisan bigotry which burned in their bosoms at the time, and even embittered the intercourse of society. It was natural for them to feel indignant at the conduct of those who—holding opposite opinions—pursued an opposite course, in so serious a question as that of war with a foreign enemy. Nor was their example, in this respect, very different from that of the federalists. Both parties were wrought into a kind of frenzy by the irritation of mutual opposition and mutual hostility.

While doing this justice to the democracy, I claim the same candor for the federalists. They acted according to their convictions, as I have before said, and this was not only their right but their duty. The doctrine of the war partisans, holding legal, constitutional opposition to an administration which has declared war, to be treason, is alike dangerous and

despotic. A war may be declared merely to serve a party: the administration may be base, incompetent, treacherous; yet, if this doctrine be true, the people—having lost the greatest of all rights—the right to think, speak, and act, according to their convictions—are bound to give a blind and slavish support to those who, either by incompetence or corruption, are leading the country to ruin.

Let me invite your attention to the principles of New England—the federalists of New England—as stated by Daniel Webster, in a Fourth of July oration, at Portsmouth, New Hampshire, a few days after the declaration of war:

“ With respect to the war in which we are now involved, the course which our principles require us to pursue can not be doubtful. It is now the law of the land, and as such we are bound to regard it. Resistance and insurrection form no part of our creed. The disciples of Washington are neither tyrants *in* power, nor rebels *out*. If we are taxed to carry on this war, we shall disregard certain distinguished examples,\* and shall pay.

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\* This was an allusion to the Whisky Rebellion in Western Pennsylvania, in 1794, which Albert Gallatin—one of Madison's cabinet, and a prominent supporter of the war—had done much to stimulate. The inhabitants of that quarter were chiefly foreigners. The law which offended them was passed by Congress in 1791, and laid a tax on distilled spirits—one of their chief products at that time. A considerable army was assembled by the malcontents, and the United States revenue officers were resisted, whipped, tarred and feathered. The insurrection was finally put down by a proclamation issued by the President (Washington), and the marching toward the scene of action of a respectable body of militia, under Gov. Lee, of Maryland.

This resistance, however, was in some degree pardonable, considering the general ignorance and character of those concerned in it, and considering, also, that the general government had just gone into op-

If our personal services are required, we shall yield them to the precise extent of our constitutional liability. At the same time the world may be assured that we know our rights and shall exercise them. We shall express our opinions on this as on every measure of government, I trust without passion, I am certain without fear. We have yet to hear that the extravagant progress of pernicious measures abrogates the duty of opposition, or that the interest of our native land is to be abandoned by us in the hour of the thickest danger and most necessity. By the exercise of our constitutional right of suffrage—by the peaceful remedy of election—we shall seek to restore wisdom to our councils, and peace to our country.”\*

That was the federal doctrine, and that the federal practice. Now I put it to your conscience—is not

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eration, and called for unaccustomed sacrifices on the part of the people. It was otherwise in the case of South Carolina, when, in the autumn of 1832, she made a general movement to resist the tariff laws of Congress, on the ground that they were unconstitutional. This course had been recommended by a convention and various public meetings, and the legislature of the State, meeting soon after, sanctioned these views. The tariff acts were declared null and void, and in order to resist their execution, active measures were adopted to arm the citizens. The city of Charleston became at once a great military depot, and the whole State was bristling with bayonets. Col. Hayne, who, a short time before, in the Senate of the United States, had arraigned the members of the Hartford Convention as traitors, now became governor of the State, for the express purpose of directing this formidable treason. Mr. Calhoun resigned the vice-presidency, and accepted a seat in the Senate, for the purpose of there vindicating the conduct of his State. This fearful blow, aimed directly at the Constitution and the Union, was averted by what is called the Compromise of Mr. Clay—which, in point of fact, consisted in forcing the general government to yield to a menace of rebellion. The movement was so far successful, that it cherished the seeds of Nullification, which had been widely sown by Jefferson and his associates in the Southern States; and at the present day, its doctrines may be considered as held by a majority of the democratic party there. Compare all this with the conduct of New England federalism!

\* See the New York Evening Post for July 21, 1812—where this is held to be sound federal doctrine.

this more manly, more American, more in the spirit of true liberty, than the slavish doctrine which holds every man to be a traitor who does not support the administration—good or bad, wise or unwise—even against his honest convictions?\*

If, then, the people of New England had a right to follow their convictions, what was their actual conduct? Look closely into the history of the times—peruse the acts of legislatures, the doings of authorized public assemblies—and you will find a uniform, unswerving loyalty to the Constitution, the country, and the laws. The federalists of New England did not—like Albert Gallatin and other democrats, afterward supporters of the war, and believers in the doctrine that opposition is treason—rise in rebellion, and seek to overthrow the government. They did not—like Calhoun, another democrat, and one of the chief authors of the war, as well as one of the promoters of this gag-law of conscience—array the States in arms, and cry out for a dissolution of the Union! They did not—as is now the fashion, even with certain democrats in full communion with the party—claim that the Union shall be

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\* If we admit this doctrine, that opposition to an administration in time of war is treason, then Chatham, who advocated the cause of America in the British Parliament, during the Revolution, was a traitor; Lamartine, Cavaignac, and Victor Hugo, who opposed Louis Napoleon's war for the suppression of the Roman Republic, were traitors; all the friends of liberty, who, from time immemorial, have opposed the wars of their respective governments for the perpetuation of tyranny, are to be inscribed in the list of traitors. Certainly democracy errs in employing despotism and injustice, under the pretense of propagating liberty. There is no surer way to make liberty itself feared and hated

torn asunder, whenever the administration of the government does not altogether please them. No: their standard of duty was higher than that—resistance and insurrection formed no part of their creed or their conduct: they were taxed, and they paid; their personal services were required, and they rendered them to the extent of their constitutional liability; they defended the country, and even the property of the United States, when the general government was powerless to protect them; they stood by the Constitution, as a thing too sacred to be violated, even under the extremest oppression of what they deemed an unwise and unpatriotic government!

Who, then, has a right to accuse them of treason? Not the Nullifier, nor the Disunionist, nor the Secessionist—all clamorous for the destruction of the Union, whenever, in their opinion, the government is not properly administered; surely no member of a party, which holds in its bosom, and cherishes as in full fellowship, individuals who are chiefly distinguished for bearing these names, and for asserting and propagating these doctrines! Strange is it—passing strange—that from the beginning—in peace or war—New England Federalism should have furnished a steady example of loyalty to the Constitution, and that—springing from her bosom, and expressive of her spirit—she should have given to this country the acknowledged Champion of the Constitution and the Union; that at the same time, South-

ern Democracy should have been the breeder of secession and disunion; that it should have furnished to the country the Arch Nullifier himself; and yet that this same Democracy presumes to point its finger at New England, and cry—“*Treason, treason to the Union!*” Certainly a democrat may steal a horse, but a federalist may not look over a hedge!

Let us, my dear C . . . , be just—just in the sight of God and man; let us render homage to the patriotism of the great body of the people of the United States—democrats and federalists—during the war of 1812–14. We may sincerely admire that cheerful, gallant, devoted spirit, which sustained the struggle without inquiring as to its justice or its prudence; at the same time, we are bound equally to respect that calmness and equanimity with which a people, deeply conscious of injury and injustice, observed the laws, and, within their limits, defied alike the aggressions of a partisan government and a foreign enemy. Doing this justice to the people, on both sides and of both parties, let history hold to a stern reckoning the selfishness of those men who declared or promoted the war, merely or mainly to subserve the interests of party!

## LETTER XXXI.

*The Hartford Convention—Its Origin—Testimony of Noah Webster—Oath of Roger M. Sherman—Gathering of the Convention—Doings of Democracy thereupon—Physiognomy of the Convention—Sketches of some of the Members—Colonel Jessup—Democracy in the Streets—Report of the Convention—Reception of the Doings of the Convention by Madison and his Party—Its Effect and Example—Comparison of the Hartford Convention with the Nullifiers—The Union forever.*

MY DEAR C \*\*\*\*\*

I come now to the "Hartford Convention." Me-thinks I hear you remark, with an aspect of dismay—are you not venturing into deep water in treating of such a subject, generally regarded as an historical abyss, in which much may be lost and nothing can be gained?

Well, my friend, suppose you do ask this—is it really a good reason why I should not tell what I have seen, what I know, what I believe, in relation to it? The Hartford Convention was in my time: my uncle, Chauncey Goodrich, was one of its prominent members. I was then living with him;\* I saw all the

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\* I have stated elsewhere that he had promised to make me one of his aids. Accordingly, H. L. Ellsworth—afterward Indian Agent and Commissioner of Patents—and myself were appointed, with the rank of



persons constituting that famous body, at his house ; the image and superscription of the most distinguished individuals are fresh in my recollection. I remember the hue and aspect of the political atmosphere, then and there. Why should I not tell these things ? You may, perhaps, entertain the common notion that the Hartford Convention was a congregation of conspirators—traitors—and I shall invite you to abandon this delusion. It may not be pleasant to hear your cherished opinions controverted : it is always a little disagreeable to receive truth, which requires us to sacrifice something of our self-esteem, by giving up errors which have become part of our mental constitution. But certainly you will not silence me on any such narrow ground as this. The time has come when one may speak freely on this subject, and surely without offense. Forty years have passed since the gathering of that far-famed body. Every member of it is dead. I will not insist that you shall say nothing of them which is not good ; but I claim the privilege of saying of them what I know to be true. I am sure you will listen to me patiently, if not approvingly.

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major, April 17, 1815. I was not very ambitious of my title, for not long after "*Major Goodridge*," of Bangor, Maine, acquired an infamous notoriety, in consequence of a trial (December, 1816) in which Daniel Webster made a celebrated plea, unmasking one of the most extraordinary cases of duplicity and hypocrisy on record. This Major Goodridge pretended to have been robbed, and the crime was charged upon two persons by the name of Kenniston. In the defense of these, Mr. Webster proved that the charge was false, and that the accuser had himself fabricated the whole story of the robbery. (See Webster's Works, vol. v. page 441.)

You may perhaps suppose that there is but one opinion in the country as to the character of that assembly ; but let me observe that there are two opinions upon the subject, and if one is unfavorable, the other is diametrically opposite. In New England, the memories of those who constituted the Convention are held in reverence and esteem, by the great body of their fellow-citizens, including a large majority of those whose opinions are of weight and value, and this has been so from the beginning.

I have said that they are now all gathered to their fathers. As they have gone down, one by one, to their last resting-place, public opinion has pronounced sentence upon their lives and characters. I ask your attention to the historical fact, that in every instance, this has been a eulogy—not for talent only, but the higher virtues of humanity. Of the twenty-six members who constituted the Convention, *every one has passed to an honored grave.* The members of the Hartford Convention were, in effect, chosen by the people, at a time of great trouble and alarm, for the purpose of devising the ways and means to avert threatening—impending evils. All felt the necessity of selecting persons of the highest wisdom, prudence, and virtue, and never was a choice more happily made. Most of these men were indeed of that altitude of talent, piety, dignity, and patriotism, which partisan pigmies naturally hate, by the inherent antipathy of littleness to greatness, and of vice to virtue; but in New England,

the enlightened generation among whom they lived, estimated them according to their true merits. These never believed them to be conspirators; they knew, indeed, the fact to be otherwise. Even the blinding influence of party spirit has never made the better class of democrats in New England believe that the Convention meditated treason. As to the mass of the people, they held and still hold that the Hartford Convention was one of the ablest and wisest assemblies ever convened in the country.

I am aware, however, that the prevailing opinion in the United States at large has been, and perhaps still is, the reverse of this. Out of New England, democracy is the dominant party. The war was a democratic measure, and the Convention was the work of the federalists, who opposed the war. It is, doubtless, too much to expect that party spirit will exercise candor toward those who brave and baffle it—at least during the conflict. There were many reasons why the Convention was an unpardonable sin in the eyes of democracy: it was opposition to the war, and that itself was treason: the war was attended with defeat, disaster, disgrace, and to turn retribution from the heads of the war-makers, it was considered politic to charge every miscarriage to the war opposers. In short, it was deemed the best way for self-preservation, by the democratic leaders, to sink the federalists in undying infamy. Hence they persisted in denouncing the Convention as an assembly

of conspirators. It is admitted that there was no overt act of treason, but it is maintained that there was treason in their hearts, the development of which was only prevented by the return of peace, and the indignant rebuke of public sentiment.

The foundation of this tenacious calumny is doubtless to be traced to John Quincy Adams, who, having lost the confidence of his political associates—the federalists of Massachusetts—and not being elected to a second term as Senator of the United States, speedily changed his politics, and made a disclosure, real or pretended, to Jefferson, in 1808,\* to the effect that the federalists of the North—taking advantage of the uneasiness of the people on account of the distresses imposed upon them by the embargo—were meditating a separation from the Union, and an alliance with Great Britain—of all things the most likely to obtain democratic belief, and to excite democratic horror.

Here was the germ of that clinging scandal against New England, which has been perpetuated for forty years. It certainly had a respectable voucher at the beginning, but its utter want of foundation has long since been proved. For about twenty years, however, the libel was permitted—in secret and of course without contradiction—to ferment and expand and work itself over the minds of Jefferson and his associates.

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\* See note on page 274, series, vol. iii. pp. 79, 117.

of this work. Also Hildreth, second

It had created such an impression, that Madison—when President—had only to be told by an unaccredited foreigner, that he had the secret of a federal plot for disunion in Massachusetts, and he at once bought it, and paid fifty thousand dollars for it out of the public treasury.\* No doubt he really expected to find that he had a rope round the necks of half the federalists in New England. He soon discovered, however, that the biter was bit. John Henry duped the President, who seized the hook, because it was baited with suspicions, the seeds of which John Q. Adams had furnished some years before.

It was not till the year 1828, when that person was a candidate for the presidency a second time, that the whole facts in regard to this calumny were developed. He was then called seriously to account,† and such

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\* In March, 1812, Madison sent to Congress certain documents, pretending to disclose a secret plot, for the dismemberment of the Union, and the formation of the Eastern States into a political connection with Great Britain. It seems that in the winter of 1809, Sir J. H. Craig, Governor-general of Canada, employed John Henry to undertake a secret mission to the United States for this object. Henry proceeded through Vermont and New Hampshire to Boston. He, however, never found a person to whom he could broach the subject! As he stated, the British government refused the promised compensation, and therefore he turned traitor, and sold his secret to our government. The subject was fully discussed in Parliament, and it appeared that Henry's scheme was not known to or authorized by the British government. The whole substance of the matter was, that our government was duped by a miserable adventurer. The conduct of Madison, in this evident greediness to inculcate the federalists, was a lasting ground of dislike and hostility to him. See *Young's Amer. Statesman*, p. 248.

† I was living in Boston at the time (October, 1828) when the public first became fully aware of the fact, that, twenty years before, Mr. Adams had planted the seeds of this accusation against the northern fed

was the effect, that from that time he was silent. In vain did he attempt to furnish evidence of a plausible foundation for his story. He referred to various witnesses, but it was pointedly remarked that all, save one,\* were dead. Yet these even seemed to rise up

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eralists in the eager soil of Mr. Jefferson's mind, where it had flourished in secret, and whence it had been widely disseminated. There was a general—indeed, an almost universal—feeling of indignation and astonishment. The presidential election was at hand, and Mr. Adams was the candidate of the whig party for a second term. Those very persons, whom he had thus maligned—themselves or their descendants—were now his supporters. The election was permitted to pass, and Massachusetts gave her vote for Mr. Adams; he was, however, defeated, and Jackson became his successor.

And now came the retribution. Mr. Adams was addressed by H. G. Otis, T. H. Perkins, William Prescott, Charles Jackson, and others—men of the highest standing, and representing the old federal party, charged with treason by him—demanding the proofs of the accusation for which he stood responsible. I have not space to give here the discussion which followed. Those who wish can find the case clearly stated in *Young's American Statesman*, page 442, &c., &c. The result certainly was, that Mr. Adams showed no grounds, even for suspicion, of what he charged; and that, even if there had been some foundation for his opinion, it referred to an earlier date, and to other individuals, and could not, by any show of fact, reason, or logic, be connected with the Hartford Convention. Indeed, no person can now read the controversy referred to, without coming to this obvious conclusion. It will be remembered, in confirmation of this, that John Henry, the British agent, sent for the purpose of seducing the Boston federalists, by the British governor, Craig, never found an individual to whom he dared even to open his business!

At all events, such was the shock of public feelings, caused by the disclosure of Mr. Adams's charge made to Jefferson, that for a long time, when he walked the streets of Boston, which he occasionally visited, he was generally passed without being spoken to, even by his former acquaintances. The resentment at last subsided, but he never recovered the full confidence of the people of Massachusetts: they were content, however, in view of his great merits, to let the matter pass into oblivion. It is only in obedience to the call of history that I write these facts.

\* This individual was William Plumer, a Senator from New Hampshire, who stated that in 1803 and 1804, he was himself in favor of

and speak from their very graves. Sons, brothers, relatives, associates—including some of the first men in the United States—indignantly denied, in behalf of those for whom they had a right to speak, the imputations thus cast upon them. No fair-minded man can read the discussion now, and fail to see that Mr. Adams either invented his story—which, however, is by no means to be presumed—or that, according to the peculiar structure of his mind, having become hostile to the federal leaders in Massachusetts, he really thought he saw evidences of mischief in events which, fairly viewed, furnished not the slightest ground even for suspicion.

Thus, as I think, this foundation, this beginning of the idea that the Hartford Convention originated in treasonable designs on the part of its members, is shown to be absolutely groundless. Not one particle of evidence, calculated to satisfy an honest inquirer after truth, has ever been adduced to sustain the charge. The investigation has been in the highest degree inquisitorial: it was deemed vital to the interests of the democratic party to prove, to establish this allegation of treason. Public documents, newspaper articles, private correspondence, personal

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forming a separate government for New England, but he abandoned these ideas, and used his influence against them, when, as he says, they were revived in 1809 and 1812. He, too, underwent a close examination, and it appeared that he was unable to produce any reliable evidence whatever, that any plot for disunion was formed, or that any individual, connected with the Hartford Convention, countenanced such a scheme. See *Young's Amer. Statesman*, p. 455, &c.



intercourse—all have been subjected to the rack and the thumb-screw. The question has been pushed to the conscience of an individual member of the Convention, and he has been called to testify, *on oath*, as to the origin and intentions of that assembly. Its journal, declared to contain every act, every motion, every suggestion, that took place, has been published; and now—after forty years of discussion, thus urged by hostile parties—sober history is compelled to say, that not a public document, not a private letter, not a speech, not an act, secret or open, has been brought to light, which proves, or tends to prove, the treasonable origin of the Hartford Convention!

The charge of treason is a serious one: so far as it may have a just foundation, it is fatal to personal character: it is a stain upon the State to which it attaches: it is a discredit to human nature, especially in a country like ours, and in a case like that which we are discussing. It should therefore not be made—surely it should not be maintained—unless upon positive, undeniable proof. It should not rest for its defense upon partisan malice, or that inherent littleness which teaches base minds to accept suspicion as conclusive evidence of what they believe, only because it coincides with their evil thoughts. While, therefore, there seems to be no proof of the alleged treasonable origin of the Hartford Convention—I am able to do more than can-

dor demands, and I here present you with direct testimony from a source that will not be impugned or discredited, showing that the said Convention originated with the people and from the circumstances of the times, and not with conspirators, and that its objects were just, proper, patriotic. I shall hereafter call upon you to admit, that the proceedings of the Convention were in accordance with this its lawful and laudable origin.

I now ask your candid attention to the following statement, made some years after the Convention, by Noah Webster\*—a man perhaps as universally

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\* It is certainly not necessary for me to write the biography or certify to the character of Noah Webster: these have been carried all over our country by his Spelling-book and his Dictionary, erecting monuments of gratitude in the hearts of the millions whom he has taught to read, and the millions whom he still teaches, in the perfect use of our language. It has been said, and with much truth, that he has held communion with more minds than any other author of modern times. His learning, his assiduity, his piety, his patriotism, were the ground-work of these successful and beneficent labors. It is the privilege of a great and good man to speak, and when he speaks, to be listened to. The passage here quoted is comprised in his "Collection of Essays," published in 1843: it was written with a sincere and earnest purpose, and it seems no more than due to truth and the justice of logic, to receive it as conclusive proof of the facts it asserts.

Mr. Webster, as is well known, was a native of Hartford, Conn., and was born in Oct. 1758. Among his classmates at Yale College were Joel Barlow, Oliver Wolcott, Uriah Tracy, Zephaniah Swift, and other men of eminence. His life was spent in various literary pursuits. I knew him well, and must mention an incident respecting him, still fresh in my memory. In the summer of 1824, I was in Paris, and staying at the Hotel Montmorency. One morning, at an early hour, I entered the court of the hotel, and on the opposite side, I saw a tall, slender form, with a black coat, black small-clothes, black silk stockings, moving back and forth, with its hands behind it, and evidently in a state of meditation. It was a curious, quaint, Connecticut looking apparition, strangely in contrast to the prevailing forms and aspects in this gay metropolis. 1

known and esteemed as any other in our history. He testifies to facts within his own knowledge, and surely no one will deny that, to this extent, he is a competent and credible witness.

Few transactions of the federalists, during the early periods of our government, excited so much the angry passions of their opposers as the Hartford Convention—so called—during the presidency of Mr. Madison. As I was present at the first meeting of the gentlemen who suggested such a convention; as I was a member of the House of Representatives in Massachusetts when the resolve was passed for appointing the delegates, I advocated that resolve; and further, as I have copies of the documents, which no other person may have preserved, it seems to be incumbent on me to present to the public the real facts in regard to the origin of the measure, which have been vilely falsified and misrepresented.

After the War of 1812 had continued two years, our public affairs were reduced to a deplorable condition. The troops of the United States, intended for defending the seacoast, had been withdrawn to carry on the war in Canada; a British squadron was stationed in the Sound to prevent the escape of a frigate from the harbor of New London, and to intercept our coasting-trade; one town in Maine was in possession of the British forces; the banks south of New England had all suspended the payment of specie; our shipping lay in our harbors, embargoed, dismantled, and perishing; the treasury of the United States was exhausted to the last cent; and a general gloom was spread over the country.

In this condition of affairs, a number of gentlemen, in North-

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said to myself—"If it were possible, I should say that was Noah Webster!" I went up to him, and found it was indeed he. At the age of sixty-six, he had come to Europe to perfect his Dictionary! It is interesting to know that such tenacity of purpose, such persistency, such courage, were combined with all the refined and amiable qualities which dignify and embellish domestic and private life.

ampton, in Massachusetts, after consultation, determined to invite some of the principal inhabitants of the three counties on the river, formerly composing the old county of Hampshire, to meet and consider whether any measure could be taken to arrest the continuance of the war, and provide for the public safety. In pursuance of this determination, a circular letter was addressed to several gentlemen in the three counties, requesting them to meet at Northampton. The following is a copy of the letter :

NORTHAMPTON, Jan. 5, 1814.

*Sir:* In consequence of the alarming state of our public affairs, and the doubts which have existed as to the correct course to be pursued by the friends of peace, it has been thought advisable by a number of gentlemen in this vicinity, who have consulted together on the subject, that a meeting should be called of some few of the most discreet and intelligent inhabitants of the old county of Hampshire, for the purpose of a free and dispassionate discussion touching our public concerns. The legislature will soon be in session, and would probably be gratified with a knowledge of the feelings and wishes of the people ; and should the gentlemen who may be assembled recommend any course to be pursued by our fellow-citizens, for the more distinct expression of the public sentiment, it is necessary the proposed meeting should be called at an early day.

We have therefore ventured to propose that it should be held at Col. Chapman's, in this town, on Wednesday, the 19th day of January current, at 12 o'clock in the forenoon, and earnestly request your attendance at the above time and place for the purpose before stated.

With much respect, I am, sir, your obedient servant,

JOSEPH LYMAN.

In compliance with the request in this letter, several gentlemen met at Northampton, on the day appointed, and after a free conversation on the subject of public affairs, agreed to send to the several towns in the three counties on the river, the following circular address :

*Sir:* The multiplied evils in which the United States have been involved by the measures of the late and present administrations, are subjects of general complaint, and in the opinion of our wisest statesmen call for some effectual remedy. His excellency, the Governor of the Commonwealth, in his address to the General Court, at the last and

present session, has stated, in temperate, but clear and decided language, his opinion of the injustice of the present war, and intimated that measures ought to be adopted by the legislature to bring it to a speedy close. He also calls the attention of the legislature to some measures of the general government, which are believed to be unconstitutional. In all the measures of the general government, the people of the United States have a common concern, but there are some laws and regulations, which call more particularly for the attention of the Northern States, and are deeply interesting to the people of this Commonwealth. Feeling this interest, as it respects the present and future generations, a number of gentlemen from various towns in the old county of Hampshire, have met and conferred on the subject, and upon full conviction that the evils we suffer are not wholly of a temporary nature, springing from the war, but some of them of a permanent character, resulting from a perverse construction of the Constitution of the United States, we have thought it a duty we owe to our country, to invite the attention of the good people of the counties of Hampshire, Hampden, and Franklin, to the radical causes of these evils.

We know indeed that a negotiation for peace has been recently set on foot, and peace will remove many public evils. It is an event we ardently desire. But when we consider how often the people of the country have been disappointed in their expectations of peace, and of wise measures; and when we consider the terms which our administration has hitherto demanded, some of which, it is certain, can not be obtained, and some of which, in the opinion of able statesmen, ought not to be insisted upon, we confess our hopes of a speedy peace are not very sanguine.

But still, a very serious question occurs, whether, without an amendment of the Federal Constitution, the northern and commercial States can enjoy the advantages to which their wealth, strength, and white population justly entitle them. By means of the representation of slaves, the Southern States have an influence in our national councils altogether disproportionate to their wealth, strength, and resources; and we presume it to be a fact capable of demonstration, that for about twenty years past the United States have been governed by a representation of about two-fifths of the actual property of the country.

In addition to this, the creation of new States in the South, and out of the original limits of the United States, has increased the southern interest, which has appeared so hostile to the peace and commercial prosperity of the Northern States. This power assumed by Congress of bringing into the Union new States, not comprehended within the territory of the United States at the time of the federal compact, is deemed arbitrary, unjust, and dangerous, and a direct infringement of the Constitution. This is a power which may hereafter be extended, and the evil will not cease with the establishment of peace. We would ask, then, ought the Northern States to acquiesce in the exercise of this

power? To what consequences would it lead? How can the people of the Northern States answer to themselves and to their posterity for an acquiescence in the exercise of this power, that augments an influence already destructive of our prosperity, and will in time annihilate the best interests of the northern people?

There are other measures of the general government, which, we apprehend, ought to excite serious alarm. The power assumed to lay a permanent embargo appears not to be constitutional, but an encroachment on the rights of our citizens, which calls for decided opposition. It is a power, we believe, never before exercised by a commercial nation; and how can the Northern States, which are habitually commercial, and whose active foreign trade is so necessarily connected with the interest of the farmer and mechanic, sleep in tranquillity under such a violent infringement of their rights? But this is not all. The late act imposing an embargo is subversive of the first principles of civil liberty. The trade coastwise between different ports in the *same State* is arbitrarily and unconstitutionally prohibited, and the subordinate offices of government are vested with powers altogether inconsistent with our republican institutions. It arms the President and his agents with complete control of persons and property, and authorizes the employment of military force to carry its extraordinary provisions into execution.

We forbear to enumerate all the measures of the federal government which we consider as violations of the Constitution, and encroachments upon the rights of the people, and which bear particularly hard upon the commercial people of the North. But we would invite our fellow-citizens to consider whether peace will remedy our public evils, without some amendments of the Constitution, which shall secure to the Northern States their due weight and influence in our national councils.

The Northern States acceded to the representation of slaves as a matter of compromise, upon the express stipulation in the Constitution that they should be protected in the enjoyment of their commercial rights. These stipulations have been repeatedly violated; and it can not be expected that the Northern States should be willing to bear their portion of the burdens of the federal government without enjoying the benefits stipulated.

If our fellow-citizens should concur with us in opinion, we would suggest whether it would not be expedient for the people in town meetings to address memorials to the General Court, at their present session, petitioning that honorable body to propose a convention of all the Northern and commercial States, by delegates to be appointed by their respective legislatures, to consult upon measures in concert, for procuring such alterations in the federal Constitution as will give to the Northern States a due proportion of representation, and secure them from the future exercise of powers injurious to their commercial interests; or if the General Court shall see fit, that they should pursue such other course



as they, in their wisdom, shall deem best calculated to effect these objects. The measure is of such magnitude, that we apprehend a concert of States will be useful and even necessary to procure the amendments proposed; and should the people of the several States concur in this opinion, it would be expedient to act on the subject without delay.

We request you, sir, to consult with your friends on the subject, and, if it should be thought advisable, to lay this communication before the people of your town.

In behalf, and by direction of the gentlemen assembled,

JOSEPH LYMAN, *Chairman.*

In compliance with the request and suggestions in this circular, many town meetings were held, and with great unanimity, addresses and memorials were voted to be presented to the General Court, stating the sufferings of the country in consequence of the embargo, the war, and arbitrary restrictions on our coasting trade, with the violations of our constitutional rights, and requesting the legislature to take measures for obtaining redress, either by a convention of delegates from the Northern and commercial States, or by such other measures as they should judge to be expedient.

These addresses and memorials were transmitted to the General Court then in session, but as commissioners had been sent to Europe for the purpose of negotiating a treaty of peace, it was judged advisable not to have any action upon them till the result of the negotiation should be known. But during the following summer, no news of peace arrived; and the distresses of the country increasing, and the seacoast remaining defenseless, Governor Strong summoned a special meeting of the legislature in October, in which the petitions of the towns were taken into consideration, and a resolve was passed appointing delegates to a convention to be held in Hartford. The subsequent history of that convention is known by their report.

The measure of resorting to a convention for the purpose of arresting the evils of a bad administration, roused the jealousy of the advocates of the war, and called forth the bitterest invectives. The convention was represented as a treasonable combination, originating in Boston, for the purpose of dissolving the



Union. But citizens of Boston had no concern in originating the proposal for a convention; it was wholly the project of the people in old Hampshire county—as respectable and patriotic republicans as ever trod the soil of a free country. The citizens who first assembled in Northampton, convened under the authority of the *bill of rights*, which declares that the people have a right to meet in a peaceable manner and consult for the public safety. The citizens had the same right then to meet in convention as they have now; the distresses of the country demanded extraordinary measures for redress; the thought of dissolving the Union never entered into the head of any of the projectors, or of the members of the Convention; the gentlemen who composed it, for talents and patriotism have never been surpassed by any assembly in the United States, and beyond a question the appointment of the Hartford Convention had a very favorable effect in hastening the conclusion of a treaty of peace.

All the reports which have been circulated respecting the evil designs of that Convention, I know to be the foulest misrepresentations. Indeed, respecting the views of the disciples of Washington and the supporters of his policy, many, and probably most of the people of the United States in this generation, are made to believe far more falsehood than truth. I speak of facts within my own personal knowledge. We may well say with the prophet—"Truth is fallen in the street, and equity can not enter." Party spirit produces an unwholesome zeal to depreciate one class of men for the purpose of exalting another. It becomes rampant in propagating slander, which engenders contempt for personal worth and superior excellence; it blunts the sensibility of men to injured reputation; impairs a sense of honor; banishes the charities of life; debases the moral sense of the community; weakens the motives that prompt men to aim at high attainments and patriotic achievements; degrades national character, and exposes it to the scorn of the civilized world.

Such is the testimony—direct, positive, documentary—of Noah Webster, as to the origin of the Hartford Convention.\* This, be it remembered, is evidence furnished by one outside of that assembly: let me now present you with the testimony of Roger Minot Sherman—a member of that body, and a worthy bearer of one of the most honored names in American history.

[From the *Norwalk Gazette*, January, 1831.]

*To the Editor of the Gazette:*

Previous to the trial of Whitman Mead, on the charge of libel, of which you gave a brief notice in your last number, the pris-

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\* This statement, on the part of Mr. Webster, does not exclude the supposition that the idea of a convention of the New England States may have been previously suggested by others. Such a thing was very likely to occur to many minds, inasmuch as New England had been accustomed, from time immemorial, to hold conventions, in periods of trouble and anxiety. His testimony, however, shows clearly that the actual, efficient movement which resulted in the Hartford Convention, originated, as he states, with the citizens of Hampshire county. Other testimony shows that some prominent federalists did not at first favor it, and only yielded at last to a feeling of prudence, in following this lead of the people.

The following letter from Harrison Gray Otis to Mrs. Willard, written in reply to a request from her, for information on the subject, will be seen to correspond with Mr. Webster's statement, and also with the proceedings of the Convention, and all other known facts relating to it, in such a manner as to satisfy every honest mind of its truth.

"The Hartford Convention, far from being the original contrivance of a cabal for any purpose of faction or disunion, was a result growing, by natural consequences, out of existing circumstances. More than a year previous to its institution, a convention was simultaneously called for by the people in their town meetings, in all parts of Massachusetts. Petitions to that effect were accumulated on the tables of the legislative chamber. They were postponed for twelve months by the influence of those who now sustain the odium of the measure. The adoption of it was the consequence, not the source of a popular sentiment; and it was intended by those who voted for it, as a safety-valve, by which the

oner moved the Court for a subpoena, to Mr. Sherman, of Fairfield, Mr. Goddard, of Norwich, and others, as witnesses in his behalf. It was allowed by the Court, and was served on Mr. Sherman, but could not be, seasonably, on Mr. Goddard, on account of the lateness of his application. One of the articles charged as libellous, compared a recent political meeting at Hartford with the Hartford Convention, and the prisoner supposed that a full development of the proceedings of that Convention would furnish a legal vindication of the article in question. With a view to such development, he wished the testimony of the gentlemen above named. At the instance of the prisoner, Mr. Sherman testified on the trial of the case, and the inclosed paper contains his testimony, exact in substance, and very nearly in his language—which you are at liberty to publish.—[The trial took place at Fairfield, Connecticut, the place of Mr. Sherman's residence, in January, 1831.]

State of Connecticut, }  
                                   *vs.*  
 Whitman Mead.        } *Hon. Roger Minot Sherman's Testimony.*

*Question by the Prisoner.* What was the nature and object of the Hartford Convention?

*Answer.* I was a member of that Convention. It met on the 15th of December, 1814. The United States were then at war with Great Britain. They had, in their forts and armies, twenty-seven thousand effective men: of these about thirteen hundred only were employed in New England. The war had been in operation two years and a half. We had a seacoast of almost seven hundred miles to protect, and with the exception of about thirteen hundred men, had the aid of no military force from the United States. By internal taxes, all others having become unproductive by reason of the war, the national government raised large sums from the people within our territory. Direct taxation was the only resource of the State governments, and this had been carried to as great an extreme in Connecticut as could be sustained. The banks, which furnished all our currency, either withheld their accommodations or stopped payment, and the people were embarrassed by a general stagnation of business. Powerful fleets and armies lay off our

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steam arising from the fermentation of the times might escape, not as a boiler by which it is generated." (See *Willard's History of the United States*, p. 351.)

coasts, and were making or threatening invasions in all parts of our defenseless sea-board. Commodore DeCATUR, with his squadron, had taken refuge in the waters of Connecticut, and attracted a powerful concentration of the enemy's forces on our borders. Castine, if I mistake not, and some other parts of the territory of Massachusetts, had fallen into the hands of the British. The New England States, under all these disadvantages, were obliged to protect themselves by their own militia, at their own expense. The expenses of Connecticut greatly exceeded our resources. The duration of the war could not be foreseen, and our credit was exhausted. Attempts were made to borrow money, but without any adequate success. The national Constitution prohibited the emission of bills of credit. In this extremity, while the legislature was in session at New Haven, in October, 1814, a communication was received from the legislature of Massachusetts, proposing a convention of delegates from the New England States, to consult on the adoption of measures for their common safety. This communication was referred to a joint committee of both houses. General Henry Champion and myself were appointed from the Upper House. He was chairman of the committee. I drew the report, recommending a compliance with the proposal made by the State of Massachusetts, and assigning the reasons at length. This report was published by order of the legislature, and extensively circulated in the newspapers of this and other States. Seven delegates were appointed to represent the Convention. As soon as it was organized, Mr. Otis, a delegate from Massachusetts, proposed, after some prefatory remarks, that it should be recommended to our several legislatures to present a petition to the Congress of the United States, praying that they would consent that the New England States, or so many of them as should agree together for that purpose, might unite in defending themselves against the public enemy; that so much of the national revenue as should be collected in these States, should be appropriated to the expense of that defense; that the amount so appropriated should be credited to the United States; and that the United States should agree to pay whatever should be expended beyond that amount. This proposal was approved by the Convention. The same views had been stated here before the meeting of the delegates. By the Constitution of the United States, no such compact for mutual defense could be formed, without the consent of Congress. By thus augmenting our immediate resources, and obtaining the national guaranty that the expenses of the war, to be increased by the States thus uniting, should be ultimately paid out of the national treasury, it was supposed that our credit, as well as our present pecuniary resources, would be enhanced. A debate was had in the Convention as to certain amendments to the Constitution of the United States, to be proposed for adoption by the State legislatures. One was, that Congress should not have power to declare war without the concurrence of two-thirds of both houses. I can not, from recollection, detail the proposed amendments;

but they appear on the printed report of the Convention, of which I have a copy at my office, which the prisoner may use on the trial, if he pleases. A committee, of whom I was one, was appointed by the Convention to draw up that report to present to their respective legislatures. The proposal of Mr. Otis was adopted with little variation. This report was immediately printed by order of the Convention, and was circulated throughout the country.

Among other things, as may be seen by that report, it was recommended to the legislatures represented in the Convention, to adopt measures to protect their citizens from such conscriptions or impressments as were not authorized by the Constitution of the United States. This resolution originated from a project of the then Secretary of War, which I believe was not adopted by Congress. The secretary of the Convention kept a journal of their proceedings. This, as I understand, was deposited by Mr. Cabot, the President, in the office of the Secretary of State of Massachusetts, and a copy transmitted to Washington, and lodged in the office of the Secretary of State of the United States. It was afterward published in certain newspapers. I saw it in the *American Mercury*, a newspaper published at Hartford, by Mr. Babcock. The legislatures of Massachusetts and Connecticut, pursuant to the recommendation of the Convention, sent a delegation to Washington, to present their respective petitions to the Congress of the United States. The gentlemen sent from Connecticut were Mr. Terry, Mr. Goddard, and, I think, Mr. Dwight. On their arrival, the Treaty of Peace, concluded at Ghent, reached the national government, and further measures became unnecessary.

This is an outline of the origin and proceedings of the Hartford Convention. There was not, according to my best recollection, a single motion, resolution, or subject of debate, but what appears in the printed journal or report. If any further particulars are requested, I will state them.

*Question by the Prisoner.* Was it not an object of the Convention to embarrass and paralyze the government of the United States in the prosecution of the war with Great Britain?

*Answer.* It was not. Nothing of the kind was done or entertained by the Convention, or, so far as I know or believe, by those by whom it was originated. On the contrary, its principal object was a more effectual co-operation in that war, as to the defense of the New England States.

*Question by the Prisoner.* Has not that Convention been generally reputed in the United States to be treasonable?

*Answer.* Much has been said and published to that effect, but without the least foundation. I believe I know their proceedings perfectly; and that every measure, done or proposed, has been published to the world. No one act has ever been pointed out, to my knowledge, as inconsistent with their obligations to the United States, nor was any such act ever contemplated by them.

Here is the testimony of a great and good man—a member of the Convention—*under oath*. Who will venture to gainsay it? Certainly no individual who feels the claims of truth, and appreciates the requisitions of logic, unless he is armed with proofs, clear, indisputable, demonstrative; he must bring facts sufficient to destroy the direct testimony of such men as Noah Webster and Roger M. Sherman, and, indeed, a cloud of other witnesses of equal weight and responsibility.

It seems to me that every candid mind, upon these statements, will be constrained to admit that the Convention thus originated in public necessity, and not in treason; I think the additional evidence I am about to present will satisfy you that their proceedings were in harmony with the wise and worthy motives that brought the members together.

If you look into certain partisan histories of the times, you might be led to suppose that on the day of the gathering of the Convention at Hartford—the 15th of December, 1814—the heavens and the earth were clothed in black; that the public mind was filled with universal gloom; that the bells—tremulous with horror—tollled in funereal chimes; that the flag of the country everywhere was at half-mast; and that the whole American army marched with muffled drums and inverted arms, and all this in token of the quaking terror of the public mind, at the ominous gathering of a committee of some two dozen mild, respect-



able, gray-haired old gentlemen, mostly appointed by the legislatures of Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Rhode Island, to investigate and report upon the state of public affairs! Such, I recollect, was the picture of Hartford, that was circulated over the country by the democratic papers\* remote from the

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\* The following is from the *American Mercury*, the democratic organ at Hartford—Dec. 18, 1815, a year after the Convention. There can be little doubt that, at the outset, many of the democrats really felt that the Convention meditated treason. I have already shown that the leaders of democracy had been made, by the revelations of John Q. Adams, to suspect the northern federalists; and there is no doubt that Madison and his cabinet, for a time, apprehended that the Hartford Convention was to be the fulfillment of Adams's prediction. But the maledictions here poured out by the *Mercury*—a year after the gathering of the Convention, and when its innocence, to say the least, was universally known and understood—were mere electioneering devices. They are interesting, however, as showing the means by which the obstinate prejudice against the Convention was wrought into the minds of the mass of the democratic party.

"The fifteenth of December is an epoch in the history of America which can never be passed over by Republicans, without mingled emotions of regret and exultation: of regret, that we have among us 'men—freeborn men—men born, nursed, and brought up by our firesides—Americans—American citizens,' who are so depraved, so wicked, as to aim a dagger at the vitals of their already bleeding country, and to attempt to subvert the liberties of the people; of exultation, that the grand designs of these hellish conspirators have been frustrated with infamy, and that the Union has triumphed over their mischievous machinations!

"Impressed with these sentiments, the Republicans of Hartford, on Friday last (being the day of the first meeting of the Convention), displayed the flag of the Union at half-mast during the early part of the day, as expressive of their sorrow for the depravity of those, who, one year since, were plotting in our city, in conjunction with Britain, the destruction of the liberties of the Republic. In the afternoon, the flag was raised to the masthead, as emblematical of the complete discomfiture of their designs, and the triumph of the Constitution. In the rueful countenance of the federalists, it was plain to discover the mortification and chagrin which they experienced. They say, let us bury in oblivion's dark bastille all bitter recollection! But so long as New England is cursed with federal rulers, till she emerges from the darkness



scene of action. The whole is very well reflected in the inspired pages of Charles Jared Ingersoll,\* who may be considered as the Jeremiah of democracy, for this period of our history. He seems to have regarded himself as specially raised up to prophesy against New England. "The sin of Judah"—that is, of federalism—he has written "with a pen of iron," though not "with the point of a diamond."

Now I perfectly well remember the day of the gathering of the Convention.† There was in the city

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which has for years enveloped her, till republicanism reigns triumphant throughout New England (which we trust in God is close at hand), it becomes the imperious duty of Republicans to hold up to the contempt of the people, their wicked and nefarious designs. \* \* \*

"We think it a duty we owe to our country, to publish annually the names of those who composed the 'Hartford Convention,' that they may never be forgotten." Here follows a list of the names.

Not only the Hartford Mercury, but the Boston Patriot, and probably other democratic journals, made a similar pledge to hold up to eternal disgrace this black list of conspirators. All this was, however, a mere electioneering game, and after two or three years, the pledge was forgotten.

\* "*Historical Sketch of the Second War between the United States and Great Britain*, by Charles Jared Ingersoll."

† The following are the names of the members of the so-called Hartford Convention: those from Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Rhode Island were appointed from the State legislatures; those from New Hampshire, by county conventions; the delegate from Vermont was chosen by persons in the county of Windham. These were all appointed "*for the purpose of devising and recommending such measures for the safety and welfare of these States as may be consistent with our obligations as members of the National Union.*"

*From Massachusetts*—George Cabot, Nathan Dane, William Prescott, Harrison Gray Otis, Timothy Bigelow, Joshua Thomas, Samuel Sumner Wilde, Joseph Lyman, Stephen Longfellow, Jr., Daniel Waldo, Hodijah Baylies, George Bliss.

*From Connecticut*—Chauncey Goodrich, John Treadwell, James Hillhouse, Zephaniah Swift, Nathaniel Smith, Calvin Goddard, Roger M. Sherman.

a small squad of United States recruits—I think some two dozen in number. These, assisted no doubt by others, ran up the American flag at their rendezvous, with the British flag at half-mast, beneath it. They also—these two dozen, more or less—marched through the streets with reversed arms and muffled drums. A few persons, I believe, got hold of the bell-rope of the Baptist meeting-house, and rang a funereal chime. All this—chiefly the work of the rabble—was the scoff of the great body of the people; nevertheless, it was reported in the democratic papers abroad, as if some black and mighty portent had signalized the arrival of the Convention. The simple truth was, that the six and twenty gray-haired men—legislators, senators, judges—honored for long years of service—came quietly into town, and were welcomed by the mass of the citizens, according to their standing and their mission, with respect, esteem, and confidence.

Let us take a sketch of what followed from the prophet Jared: “On the 15th of December, 1814, with excited sentiments of apprehension, mingled approval and derision, the inhabitants of Hartford awaited the nefarious Convention, which takes its bad name from that quiet town.” “One of their number, Chauncey Goodrich, was mayor of Hartford, *by whose arrangements the Convention was disposed of*

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*From Rhode Island*—Daniel Lyman, Samuel Ward, Edward Manton, Benjamin Hazard.

*From New Hampshire*—Benjamin West, Mills Olcott.

*From Vermont*—William Hall, Jr.

*in the retirement of the second story of an isolated stone building, in which the little State Senate or Council sat, when, in rotation, Hartford was the seat of government. Locking themselves up stairs, there, in awfully obscure concealment, for three weeks, twice every day, except Sunday, Christmas and New Year's-day, they were continually in conclave," &c.*

What an accumulation of horrors! Tell me, my dear C . . . , does not your hair bristle at the grisly picture? It indeed sounds like a tale of the Inquisition. What a pity it is to spoil it! And yet, this infernal Rembrandt coloring—this violent contrast of light and shade—is wholly imaginary. The Convention met in the council-chamber of the State-house, which the gazetteers tell us—and tell us truly—is a very handsome building. It is in the center of the city, and the most prominent edifice in the place. The room in which they met is still the senate-chamber, and is neither isolated nor obscure: on the contrary, it is one of the best and most conspicuous rooms in the building: at the time, it was probably the finest public hall in the State.\*

It is true that the Convention sat with closed doors, as probably every similar convention had done be-

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\* The Hon. R. R. Hinman, the historian of Connecticut during the Revolutionary period, and several years Secretary of State, once told me a good anecdote in relation to this dark, dismal hiding-place of the "nefandous" Convention. One day, a man from the South—I believe a South Carolinian—some one doubtless who had been reading Ingersoll's history, came into the office of the Secretary, and desired to be shown the place where the Hartford Convention sat. Mr. Hinman accordingly

fore. The State Council—in whose room the Convention met—had furnished this example from time immemorial. The General Assembly of Connecticut had always done the same, at periods of difficulty and danger. The Convention that framed the Constitution of the United States had done likewise. The Continental Congress did the same, through the whole period of the war of the Revolution. A great part of the executive business of the United States Senate is now done in secret session, and is never known to the public. The archives of the State Department, at Washington, are under the lock and key of the Executive. The legislature of every State has the capacity to hold secret sessions, and nobody questions their right to exercise it according to their discretion. Both houses of Congress discussed, resolved upon, and voted the war of 1812, in secret session! And yet, what was useful, proper, and of good re-

took him into the room. The stranger looked around with much curiosity, and presently he saw Stuart's likeness of Washington—for in this chamber is one of the most celebrated of the full-length portraits of the Father of his Country.

The stranger started. "And was this picture here, when the Convention held its sittings?" said he.

"Yes, certainly," said the secretary.

"Well," replied the man—observing the high color which Stuart had given to the countenance of Washington, in the picture—"well, I'll be d——d if he's got the blush off yet!"

This is a sharp joke; but yet, it is natural to ask—if Washington's picture should blush for the Hartford Convention—which above all things advocated the preservation of the Union—what should it have done in the presence of that Convention in South Carolina, November, 1832, which resulted in an open, avowed opposition to the Union, and has perhaps laid the foundation for its overthrow, in establishing the doctrine of Secession?

port in all other similar bodies, was "*nefandous*" in the Hartford Convention! So saith Jared, the historian, whose account seems to consist largely of the prejudices and exaggerations of the democratic papers of that day—raked together in one undigested heap. As such it is amusing—nay, instructive—but alas, how is history degraded, when such a mass of incongruities assumes its sacred name!

I have told you that I was at this time living with my uncle, Chauncey Goodrich—then a member of the Convention. His house, of course, became the frequent rendezvous of the other members, and here I often saw them. On one occasion, in the evening, they all met at his house, by invitation—the only instance in which they partook of any similar festivity. At this time, the other persons present, so far as I recollect, were William Coleman,\* editor of the

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\* William Coleman was a native of Massachusetts, and was born in 1766. He studied law, and settled at Greenfield about 1794, where he erected a house, noted for its architectural beauty. Here he also edited a newspaper. Buckingham—vol. ii. p. 319—says that he was remarkable for his vigor in skating, having passed in one evening from near Greenfield to Northampton, a distance of about twenty miles. As I recollect him, he was a large man, of robust appearance, with a vigorous and manly countenance. His nose was bony and prominent, and in connection with a strongly defined brow, gave his face an expression of vigor and sagacity. His eye was gray, his hair light brown, and at the time I speak of, was slightly grizzled. He removed to New York, where he published some law books, and in 1801 (Nov. 16), founded the Evening Post, which became a leading federal paper, and so continued for many years. Its columns were distinguished for ability, as well in its political discussions as its literary essays and criticisms. In general, he set a good example of dignity of style and gentlemanly decorum, though he was drawn into some violent altercations with Cheetham and Duane. It is sufficient eulogy of Mr. Coleman to say that he enjoyed the con-

New York Evening Post, Theodore Dwight, secretary of the Convention, my cousin, Elizur Goodrich, now of Hartford, and myself. The majority of the members were aged men, and marked not only with the gravity of years, but of the positions which they held in society—for some of them had been governors, some senators, some judges. I do not recollect ever to have seen an assemblage of more true dignity in aspect, manner, and speech. They were dressed, on the evening in question, somewhat in the ancient costume—black coats, black silk waistcoats, black breeches, black silk stockings, black shoes. I wonder that this universal black has not been put into the indictment against them! Perhaps the silvery-whiteness of their heads—for the majority were past fifty, several past sixty—may have pleaded in extenuation of this sinister complexion of their dress.

The most imposing man among them, in personal appearance, was George Cabot,\* the president. He was over six feet in height, broad-shouldered, and of a manly step. His hair was white—for he was past sixty—his eye blue, his complexion slightly florid. He seemed to me like Washington—as if the great man,

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fidence of Hamilton, King, Jay, and other notabilities of that day, and that he made the Evening Post worthy of the editorial successorship of Leggett (1829) and of Bryant (1836).

\* George Cabot was a native of Salem, Mass., born in 1752. He was originally a shipmaster, but he rose to various stations of eminence. He became a senator of the United States, and in 1798 was appointed the first Secretary of the Navy, but declined. His personal influence in Boston was unbounded. He died in that city, 1823.



as painted by Stuart, had walked out of the canvas, and lived and breathed among us. He was, in fact, Washingtonian in his whole air and bearing, as was proper for one who was Washington's friend, and who had drunk deep at the same fountain—that of the Revolution—of the spirit of truth, honor, and patriotism. In aspect and general appearance, he was strikingly dignified, and such was the effect of his presence, that in a crowded room, and amid other men of mark—when you once became conscious that he was there, you could hardly forget it. You seemed always to see him—as the traveler in Switzerland sees Mont Blanc towering above other mountains around him, wherever he may be. And yet he was easy and gracious in his manners, his countenance wearing a calm but radiant cheerfulness, especially when he spoke. He was celebrated for his conversational powers, and I often remarked that when he began to converse, all eyes and ears turned toward him, as if eager to catch the music of his voice and the light of his mind. He came to my uncle's almost every morning before the meeting of the Convention, and I have never felt more the power of goodness and greatness, than in witnessing the intercourse between these two men.

The next person as to prominence, in the Massachusetts delegation, was Harrison Gray Otis,\* then in

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\* Harrison Gray Otis, son of Samuel A. Otis, the first Secretary of the Senate of the United States, was born in 1765, and died 1848. He



the zenith of his years and his fame. He had a name honorable by tradition, and a position—social as well as political—due to his great wealth, his eminent talents, and his various accomplishments. He was doubtless the most conspicuous political character in New England—for the sun of Webster was but just rising in the horizon. He was deemed ambitious, and hence was regarded by the democrats as the arch instigator of the traitorous Convention. Such an opinion, however, shows the greatest ignorance of his character and the actual state of things. Mr. Otis was a far-seeing politician, and knew there was no treason in the hearts of the people of New England: he stood at the highest point to which ambition could lead him, and any step in that direction must be downward. Besides, he was of the cautious, not the dashing school of statesmanship, as well by constitution as training. To suppose him a plotter of treason, is to divest him of all his attributes—*inherent and conventional*. It is, furthermore, historical and beyond dispute, that he was averse to the Convention. By his influence, it was delayed, long after it was proposed and almost clamored for by the

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was one of the most eminent of the Massachusetts bar, even by the side of Ames, Parsons, Lowell, and Gore. He succeeded Ames in Congress, in 1797. In 1817, he became a senator of the United States. To learning and vigor of intellect, he added great powers of oratory, captivating alike to the simple and the refined. He held various other offices, and in these, discharged his duties with distinguished ability. His residence was at Boston. He retained his mental faculties, his cheerfulness, and his amenity of demeanor, to the last.

people. He objected to being a member of it, and only yielded at last, that he might use his influence to secure to it a safe and tranquilizing direction. At the very opening of the Convention, he signalized himself by proposing the safe and discreet measures which were finally adopted. Hence, he always felt, with a keen sense of injustice, the imputation which long hung about him, as being the leader in a treasonable enterprise.

The impression he made on my mind upon the occasion I am describing, was deep and lasting. He had not the lofty Washingtonian dignity of George Cabot, nor the grave suavity of Chauncey Goodrich; he was, in fact, of quite a different type—easy, polished, courtly—passing from one individual to another, and carrying a line of light from countenance to countenance, either by his playful wit or gracious personal allusions. He seemed to know everybody, and to be able to say to each precisely the most appropriate thing that could be said. He was one of the handsomest men of his time; his features being classically cut, and still full of movement and expression. To me—who had seen little of society beyond Connecticut, and accustomed therefore to the rather staid manners of public men—Mr. Otis was an object of strange, yet admiring curiosity. I knew him well, some years after and when I was more conversant with the world, and he still seemed to me a very high example of the finished gentleman of the assiduous and

courtly school. He lowered himself, no doubt, in the public estimation by his somewhat restive and querulous—though masterly and conclusive—vindications of the Convention; while all the other members, conscious of rectitude, scorned to put themselves in the attitude of defense. We may forgive what seemed a weakness in Mr. Otis, while we must pay homage to that dignity in his associates, which would not stoop to ask in life, the justice which they knew posterity must render them, in their graves.

Of the other members of the Massachusetts delegation, I have less distinct personal reminiscences. Mr. Prescott, father of the historian,\* and Mr. Longfellow,† father of the poet—worthy, by their talents, their virtues, and their position, of such descendants—I only remember as two grave, respectable old gentlemen, seeming, by a magic I did not then comprehend, to extort from all around them peculiar

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\* William Prescott was a native of Pepperell, Mass., born 1762. His father, Colonel Prescott, commanded at the battle of Bunker Hill. He became one of the most eminent lawyers in the State, and filled various public stations. Mr. Webster said of him at the time of his death, in 1844: "No man in the community, during the last quarter of a century, felt himself too high, either from his position or his talents, to ask counsel of Mr. Prescott."

† Stephen Longfellow, of Portland, Maine, was an eminent lawyer, and ranked among the most distinguished and estimable citizens of New England. He was noted for unsullied purity of life and character, an inflexible devotion to his convictions, great powers of conversation, and winning amenity of manners, always mingling an elevated piety with a kindly charity to all other sects. While Maine was a part of Massachusetts, he exercised great influence in the State: after the separation, he was one of the leading men of this new member of the Union. He died in 1849.

marks of deference and respect. Since I have known their history, I have ascertained the secret.\*

One of the oldest, and in some respects the most re-

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\* The other members from Massachusetts were all eminent for their virtues and their talents.

Few names in our history are more honorably remembered than that of Nathan Dane. He was a native of Ipswich, Massachusetts, born in 1754. He was a lawyer of great eminence, and a statesman of distinguished patriotism and wisdom. He was a member of Congress under the Confederation, and was the framer of the famed ordinances of 1787, for the government of the territory of the United States north-west of the Ohio river; an admirable code of law, by which the principles of free government, to the exclusion of slavery, were extended to an immense region, and its political and moral interests secured on a permanent basis. He published some useful works, and founded a professorship of law in Harvard University. His life is a long record of beneficent works. He died in Feb. 1835.

Timothy Bigelow was a learned, eloquent, and popular lawyer, born in 1767, and died in 1821. For more than twenty years he was a member of the Massachusetts legislature, and for eleven years he was Speaker of its House of Representatives. His residence was at Medford. Mrs. Abbott Lawrence was one of his daughters.

Joseph Lyman, of Northampton, was born in 1767, and died in 1847. He was the person associated with Noah Webster and others, in the first movement for the Hartford Convention, as previously noticed. He held many important offices, and enjoyed, in an unbounded degree, the confidence of the community. He was an eminently dignified and handsome man, of the old school of manners, and mingling in his countenance and demeanor a certain seriousness, with kindness and condescension. He never failed to attend the polls, and deposited his fifty ninth ballot the year of his death!

Joshua Thomas, born 1751, and died 1821, held for many years the office of Judge of Probate for the county of Plymouth.

Samuel Sumner Wilde, born 1771 and died 1855, was an eminent lawyer, and several years judge of the Supreme Court—the same in which Parsons, Story, Sedgwick, and Sewall had officiated. He was a man of unbending integrity, and the utmost dignity and purity of life. He was the father-in-law of Caleb Cushing—the present Attorney-general of the United States.

George Bliss, born 1764, died 1830, was a distinguished lawyer of Springfield. He enjoyed in an eminent degree the respect and confidence of all who knew him.

Daniel Waldo was born in 1763 at Boston: he settled at Worcester

markable member of the Convention, was Mr. West,\* of New Hampshire. I recollect him distinctly, partly because of his saintly appearance, and partly because of the terms of affection and respect in which my uncle spoke of him. He, too, was often at our house,

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and devoted himself to mereantile affairs with great success. He acquired in a high degree the confidence of the community around him. He was distinguished for integrity, justice, and punctuality, in all the affairs of life. He died in 1845.

Thomas Handyside Perkins, born in Boston, 1764, and died in 1854. He was an eminent merchant of that city, and having amassed a large fortune, was distinguished for his liberality. Several literary and charitable institutions owe their existence to him. In person, he was a large man, with a grave countenance, but with an expression indicative of his large and generous heart.

Hodijah Baylies was born in 1757. He served during the Revolutionary war, and was at one time aid to General Lincoln, and afterward to Washington. He held various public offices, and was noted as combining, in a high degree, the Christian character with that of the gentleman. He died in 1843.

The four members from Rhode Island were among the most respectable citizens of that State.

Daniel Lyman was a native of Connecticut, born in 1776 and died in 1830. He served through the Revolutionary war, and rose to the rank of major. He afterward settled in Rhode Island, became eminent as a lawyer, and was finally chief-justice of the Supreme Court of that State.

Samuel Ward, son of Gov. Ward, of that State, was born in — and died in —. In the Revolution he was a soldier, and accompanied Arnold in his perilous march against Quebec. After the peace he devoted himself to commerce. As a soldier, patriot, and citizen, his character was without a stain.

Benjamin Hazard was among the ablest lawyers of his day, enjoying the highest esteem for his private worth. He was very swarthy, with long frizzled hair, and I particularly noticed him, among the other members, for the singularity of his appearance. He was often called by the people of his neighborhood "Black Ben." He was born in 1776 and died in 1841. He was elected to the Assembly of Rhode Island sixty-two times!

Edward Manton was a merchant of Johnston, and distinguished for his probity and moral worth. He was born in 1760 and died in 1820.

\* Benjamin West was a native of Massachusetts, son of Rev. T. West, and born in 1746. He was graduated at Harvard College, studied law, and settled at Charlestown, N. H., where he died, July 27, 1817

and seldom have I seen a man who commanded such ready love and admiration. He was then sixty-eight years old: his form tall but slender, his hair white, long, and flowing, his countenance serene, his voice full of feeling and melody. His appearance indicated the finest moral texture; but when his mind was turned to a subject of interest, his brow flashed with tokens of that high intellectual power which distinguished him. His character and his position were well displayed in a single passage of his history: "He was chosen a member of Congress under the old Confederation; a member of the convention which framed the Constitution of his adopted State, and a member of Congress under the Constitution; he was appointed Attorney-general and Judge of Probate, and yet all these offices he refused, owing to his aversion to public life, and his sincere, unambitious love of domestic peace and tranquillity." His great abilities, however, were not hidden in a napkin. He devoted himself to the practice of the law, which he pursued with eminent success, for the space of thirty years. It was in the evening of his days that he accepted his first prominent public station, and that was as member of the Hartford Convention. This he did, under a conviction that it was a period of great difficulty and danger, and he felt that duty called upon him to sacrifice his private comfort to public exigencies. Who will



believe that man to have been a conspirator, or that the people who designated him for this place were traitors?

As to the Connecticut members of the Convention, I could easily gather up pages of eulogy. There are, indeed, few such men now; I am afraid that in this age of demagogism, there are few who can comprehend them. I shall, however, present you with brief delineations of their lives and characters from the sober records of the historian.

“At the head of the Connecticut delegation stood his honor, Chauncey Goodrich, whose blanched locks and noble features had long been conspicuous in the halls of national legislation; a gentleman whose character is identified with truth and honor in all parts of the Union; a gentleman of whom Albert Gallatin was wont to say, that when he endeavored to meet the arguments of his opponents, he was accustomed to select those of Mr. Goodrich, as containing the entire strength of all that could be said upon that side—feeling that if he could answer him, he could maintain his cause; a man whom Jefferson—no mean judge of intellectual strength—used playfully to say, ‘That white-headed senator from Connecticut is by far the most powerful opponent I have, to my administration.’”

“Next to him was James Hillhouse,\* the great financier of the

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\* James Hillhouse was one of the most remarkable men of his time. He was born in 1754, entered upon the practice of the law, engaged in the Revolutionary war, became a member of Congress, and was sixteen years a senator. He possessed an iron frame, and his industry and devotion to his duties knew no bounds. He usually slept but four or five hours in twenty-four. His personal appearance was remarkable. He was over six feet high, of a large bony frame: his complexion was swarthy, and his eye black and keen. He was thought to have something



State, who found our School Fund in darkness, and left it in light; the scholar and the father, who superintended the early culture of that poet-boy, and laid the foundation of that bright and glorious intellect, which in the bowers of 'Sachem's Wood' saw, as in a vision, the magnificent scenes of Hadad, and received as guests in western groves, the spirits of oriental oracle and song; Hillhouse—the man of taste, who planted the New Haven elms; the native American, with Irish blood in his veins—the man who, like Washington, never told a lie.

“John Treadwell\* was the third delegate, whose life was filled

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of the Indian in his physiognomy and his walk, and he humorously favored this idea. He was once challenged by a Southerner, for something uttered in debate, in the Senate. He accepted the challenge, but added, that as the choice of weapons fell to him, he selected tomahawks! He was full of wit, and it is said that one day, as he was standing on the steps of the Capitol with Randolph, a drove of asses chanced to be going by—these animals being then raised in Connecticut for the South. “There are some of your constituents!” said Randolph. “Yes,” said Hillhouse; “they are going to be schoolmasters in Virginia!” This story is sometimes told of Uriah Tracey, to whom, perhaps, it really belongs.

Hillhouse always scoffed at the abuse heaped upon the Hartford Convention. Several years after the meeting of this body, he had some business at Boston, which required several advertisements in a newspaper. These he had inserted in the Patriot—a democratic paper, which had been furious against the Convention. When he went to pay the bill, he desired to see the editor. Being introduced to him, he said—“Sir, my name is Hillhouse, and I was a member of the Hartford Convention. You inserted the names of the members for several years, and promised to keep them in eternal remembrance. I am very proud of having been a member of that body, and feel that I owe you a debt of gratitude. So I have selected your paper as the object of my patronage. I owe you sixteen dollars and sixty-seven cents, and there, sir, is the money. I have to remark, however, that for several years you have neglected your promise to keep us before the world.” This led to a hearty laugh, and the two gentlemen parted. The history of Connecticut is full of this man's good works. He died in 1832.

\* John Treadwell, of Farmington, was born in 1745, and died in 1823. He studied law, and afterward was employed for thirty years in public stations, rising finally to the office of Governor of the State. He was a man of learning, and received the title of LL.D. from Yale College. He was distinguished as a consistent professor of religion, and a firm supporter of its interests. He was the first President of the American For-

with honors and usefulness." He was then on the verge of threescore and ten, and the oldest man in the Convention.

"The fourth was Chief-justice Swift,\* the first commentator upon the laws of our little republic, of whom no lawyer in the United States would dare to feign ignorance, lest he should put at risk his professional reputation.

"Nathaniel Smith was the fifth, whom the God of nature chartered to be great by the divine prerogative of genius; a jurist wiser than the books; whose words were so loaded with convincing reasons that they struck an adversary to the earth like blows dealt by a hand gauntleted in steel; to listen to whom, when he spoke in the Convention, Harrison Gray Otis turned back as he was leaving the chamber, and stood gazing in silent admiration, unconscious of the flight of time.

"The sixth was Calvin Goddard,† who long enjoyed the repu-

eign Missionary Society, and for thirty years was deacon of the church—thus mingling the humble with the higher offices of life, and discharging the duties of each with the most exemplary fidelity. In person, he was short and bulbous about the waist, with a certain air of importance in his face and carriage. Some little weaknesses can be forgiven in one whose life is so full of honors.

\* Zephaniah Swift was born in 1759; having been a member of Congress, he accompanied Oliver Ellsworth, ambassador to France in 1798, as his secretary. In 1801 he was appointed judge of the Superior Court, and was chief-justice from 1806 to 1819. He was a large man, of strong manly features; in conversation he spoke rapidly, without grace of manner or expression, but with force and perspicuity. His mind was eminently fitted for juridical duties. He died while on a visit to Ohio in 1823.

† Calvin Goddard was born 1763, and died 1842. He filled various public offices, and was mayor of Norwich for seventeen years. It is difficult to say which predominated, his learning, his wit, or his amenity. I chanced to be with him and Gen. Terry in the stage-coach from New Haven to New York, when, in February, 1815, they were proceeding to Washington, to carry the proceedings of the Convention. Gen. Terry slept nearly all the way, nor could Mr. Goddard's ceaseless wit arouse him. When they got to Washington, the news of peace had just arrived, and their "occupation was gone." They experienced some gibes, but it is said that Goddard paid back with compound interest. No man was more competent.

tation of being the most learned and successful lawyer east of the Connecticut river: an upright judge, a wise counselor, an honest man.

"Last, but not least of the Connecticut delegation, was Roger Minot Sherman,\* a profound metaphysician, a scholar equal to the younger Adams, one of the principal oracles of the New York city bar for the last twenty years of his life, who seemed more fitly than any other man to represent the lawgiver, Roger Ludlow, and to inhabit the town which he had planted, whose level acres he had sown with the quick seeds of civil liberty, and then left the up-springing crop to be harvested by the sickle of his successor."

This is the verdict—not of the apologist, not of the partisan—but of the historian, in a sober review of the past, with all the light which time has thrown

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\* Roger Minot Sherman, nephew of the celebrated Roger Sherman, was a native of Woburn, Mass., and born in 1773. He established himself as a lawyer at Fairfield, Conn., and rose to the first rank of his profession. He was distinguished for acute logical powers, and great elegance of diction—words and sentences seeming to flow from his lips as if he were reading from the Spectator. He was a man of refined personal appearance and manners; tall, and stooping a little in his walk; deliberate in his movements and speech, indicating circumspection, which was one of his characteristics. His countenance was pale and thoughtful, his eye remarkable for a keen, penetrating expression. Though a man of grave general aspect, he was not destitute of humor. He was once traveling in Western Virginia, and stopping at a small tavern, was beset with questions by the landlord, as to where he came from, whither he was going, &c. At last said Mr. Sherman—"Sit down, sir, and I will tell you all about it." The landlord sat down. "Sir," said he, "I am from the Blue Light State of Connecticut!" The landlord stared. "I am deacon in a Calvinistic church." The landlord was evidently shocked. "I was a member of the Hartford Convention!" This was too much for the democratic nerves of the landlord; he speedily departed, and left his lodger to himself. Mr. Sherman filled various offices, and in 1840, became judge of the Superior Court. To a mind at once brilliant and profound, he added the embellishments of literature and science and the graces of Christianity. He died Dec. 30, 1844.

upon the lives of those whom he thus characterizes.\*

And now, my dear C . . . , let me ask you to look at the Hartford Convention, through these Connecticut delegates—all grave and reverend seigniors—one of them sixty-nine years of age, and having been governor of the State; one of them, at the time, chief-justice of the State; another a judge of the Superior Court; two of them grown gray in the Senate of the United States: all past fifty, all distinguished for prudence, caution, sobriety; all of the Washington school in politics, morals, manners, religion. Look at these men, and then tell me if there was treason, conspiracy, dismemberment of the Union, either in their hearts, or the hearts of the people who elected them? If there be any thing holy in truth, any thing sacred in justice, degrade not the one, desecrate not the other, by calling these men traitors! Say rather that their presence in the Hartford Convention is proof—clear, conclusive, undeniable, in the utter absence of all evidence to the contrary—that it was an assembly of patriots, chosen by a patriotic people, wisely seeking the best good of the country. If this be not so, then there is no value in a good name, no ground for faith in human virtue. Treason is the highest crime against society: is there not something shocking to the universal sense of decency in char

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\* Hollister's History of Connecticut, vol. ii. p. 303.

ging this upon men thus signalized for their virtues? Such perverse logic would make Judas a saint, and the eleven true disciples, betrayers.

But I must leave discussion, and proceed with my narrative. As the Convention sat with closed doors, the world without, despite their eager curiosity, were kept in general ignorance as to their proceedings. There was a rumor, however, that Mr. Otis opened the debate, and was followed, first by Chauncey Goodrich and then by Nathaniel Smith—the latter making one of those masterly speeches for which he was renowned, and which shook even this assembly of great men with emotions of surprise and admiration. The first day's debate was said to have brought all minds to a general agreement as to the course to be adopted—that of mild and healing measures, calculated to appease the irritated minds of their constituents, to admonish the national government of the general feeling of danger and grievance, and thus to save the country from an example either of popular outbreak or organized resistance to the laws. Subsequent events showed that these rumors were well founded.

While such was the course of things in the Convention, some curious scenes transpired without and around it. I cannot do better, in order to give you an idea of these, than to transcribe part of a letter, which I recently received from a friend in Hartford, to whom I had written for some details, to refresh and confirm my own recollections. This was hastily

written, and with no idea of its publication; but it is, nevertheless, graphic, and coming from an old democrat, will be received as good authority for the facts it presents, even by the contemnners of the Convention and its federal supporters.

“Previous to the war, Captain Morgan recruited in Hartford a company of light dragoons. Elijah Boardman was his lieutenant, and Owen Ranson—afterward Major Ranson—was cornet. When war was declared, and an army was to be raised, the first thing was to appoint officers, and the *respectables*—that is, the federalists—being to a man opposed to the war, none of them applied for commissions; so that the administration was compelled—nothing loth—to officer the army from the democrats. Having a great number of appointments to make, and little time to examine the qualifications of the applicants, and, as I have remarked, having only the democrats to select from, many men received commissions who were hardly qualified to carry a musket in the ranks. Among the appointments was a general of brigade in the Vermont militia—Jonas Cutting, a boatman on the Connecticut river—who obtained his appointment of colonel through the influence of J. and E. L . . . , good democrats, for whom he boated. He was ordered to Hartford on recruiting service, where he established the head-quarters of the 25th regiment. He was a rude, boorish, uncouth man, and received but little attention from the citizens generally, and none from the respectables—the federalists: he was, however, successful in raising recruits. After a time he was sent to the lines, and was succeeded by Lieutenant-colonel Jos. L. Smith, of Berlin—a large, handsome man, of some talents, but a good deal of a fire-eater. He assumed the command at Hartford, but was not kindly received by the federalists. There was in fact no love lost between him and them.

“This brings us near the time of the Hartford Convention



the winter of 1814, preparatory to another campaign on the frontier. A very considerable force of regular troops were in cantonment in Hartford. The federalists, who were a large majority, as you know, hated the democrats, denounced the war, and detested the troops generally, and Lieutenant-colonel Smith in particular—for he thought it a part of his duty to make himself as odious to them as possible. His recruiting parties were constantly parading the city, and monopolizing the sidewalks, in all the pomp and circumstance of glorious war. With gun, drum, trumpet, blunderbuss, and thunder, they crowded the ladies into the gutters, frightened horses, and annoyed the citizens. Some of them called on Colonel Smith, as the commanding officer, and begged of him, as a gentleman, to keep his recruiting parties from Main-street—our principal avenue. I need not say that by this time an intensely bitter feeling had grown up between the two political parties, and the democrats were overjoyed that Colonel S. took pains to show his hatred and contempt for the anti-war party, and so they encouraged him to persevere, and do his duty by flouting the feds, and in raising recruits for the glorious war. So the more the citizens requested him to desist, the more he would not.

“In this state of things, the city council assembled, and passed and published an ordinance that no military parties should be permitted to march on the sidewalks, but should confine themselves to the streets. The democrats and Col. S. scouted the idea that the council had the power to regulate the march of United States troops, and so the troops persisted in this annoyance. The Governor’s Foot Guard, one hundred muskets strong, composed of our most respectable young men, and all federalists, commanded by Nathaniel Terry, Esq., now prepared a quantity of ball cartridges, which, with their arms, were deposited in the old Hartford Bank. The men were required to be always ready to act when necessary. The government recruits not heeding the ordinance, Capt. Boardman and some other officers and non-commissioned officers were arrested and imprisoned.



The United States troops, reinforced by all the out parties in the neighboring towns, now came into the city, and completely monopolized the streets by night and by day.

“The Superior Court was in session at this time, and each day during the session, the military bands, with divers supernumerary bass-drums, incessantly marched around the Courthouse with so much din that the court was obliged to adjourn. This was repeated daily, and matters had arrived at a terrible pass, when the administration at Washington saw the necessity of interfering. It was obvious that the difficulty arose chiefly from the impertinence and vulgarity of the army officers; so they ordered Colonel Jessup to come to Hartford and assume the command, and packed off Smith to the lines or somewhere else.

“Colonel Jesup on his arrival called at once on Chauncey Goodrich, the mayor, and begged him to let him know how matters stood. Jesup was a man of sense and a gentleman, and all difficulties speedily vanished. The troops were kept in their cantonments, a certain distance out of town; and only a few at a time, of the most orderly, were permitted to come into the city, and without military parade. Colonel Jesup was received into society, and caressed by the better class of citizens, and became a great favorite. He was dined and tea’d to his heart’s content by the federalists, after which the democracy rather cut him. So ended this little war.

“The celebrated Hartford Convention assembled here about this time, and Mr. Thomas Bull, a large, portly, courtly old gentleman, was the doorkeeper and messenger. As it was proper that this dignified body should have all things done decently and in order, Mr. Bull was directed to call on the reverend clergy, in turn, to pray with the Convention. Dr. Strong made the first prayer, and Dr. Perkins and other eminent clergymen followed. The Rev. Philander Chase\*—afterward Bishop Chase

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\* Philander Chase was a native of Vermont, born 1775, and died 1852. He was a man of imposing personal appearance and manners. He became bishop of Ohio in 1819, and afterward was elected bishop of Illinois.

—was at this time rector of Christ Church—a high Churchman, who probably never in all his ministry offered an extemporaneous prayer. He was, in his turn, called on by Mr. Bull, who in his blindest manner informed him of the honor conferred on him, and begged his attendance to pray at the opening of the morning session. What must have been his horror, when Mr. Chase declined, saying that he knew of no form of prayer for rebellion! Mr. Chase himself related this anecdote to me soon after. Major J. M. Goodwin was present and heard it. Nevertheless, I believe this speech was hardly original: some of the tory Episcopal clergymen had said the same thing during the Revolution. They had forms of prayer for the king, but none for liberty.

“No annoyance was offered to the Convention. A body of United States troops, under command of Jemmy Lamb, a facetious old Irishman, and the town-crier, in a fantastic military dress, marched around the State-house, while they were in session—the music playing the ‘Rogues’ March.’ The Convention, however, excited less attention in Hartford than in other places. ‘’Tis distance lends enchantment,’ &c. Very little more notice was taken of their proceedings by the people here—exclusive of violent partisans—than of those of the Superior Court.”

This sketch gives a clear insight into the state of popular feeling at this period, in Hartford, which has been the theme of much discussion and gross misrepresentation. It is obvious that, had there been no other reason for it, the danger of intrusion and interruption from the irritated United States recruits, led by incendiary officers and encouraged by reckless mischief-makers, rendered it a matter of prudence for the Convention to sit with closed doors. The State court had been braved and insulted, and the far more

obnoxious Convention would doubtless have experienced still more emphatic demonstrations of rudeness. Had the sessions been open, a guard of a hundred men would scarcely have protected them from interruption, perhaps violence.

It is creditable to all parties that Col. Jesup was sent thither: it showed a disposition on the part of the administration to afford no ground of offense; it proved that the citizens—the federalists—sought no quarrel, and would interpose no difficulties to the government troops or their officers in the lawful discharge of their duties. It showed, moreover, that they could appreciate gentlemanly qualities, and were ready to bestow honor on a gallant soldier who had fought and bled in battle for the country, even although they disapproved of the war.

As to Colonel Jesup\*—Brigadier-general Jesup now—I must say a few words. At the time I speak of, he was some thirty years old. He had recently come from the northern frontier, where he had won laurels by the side of Scott, Miller, Brown, Ripley, and other gallant soldiers. He was of modest demeanor, pleasing address, and gentlemanly tastes: it was no disparagement to his agreeable appearance that he

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\* Thomas S. Jesup was a native of Virginia, and holding the rank of Major, distinguished himself at Chippewa, Niagara, &c., during the campaign of 1814. While he was at Hartford, in the winter of 1814-15, there was a public ball, in which I was one of the managers. I recollect that he was present, and was dressed in blue undress military coat with epaulettes, white small-clothes, and white silk-stockings, and was quite a favorite with the ladies—a proper homage to the brave.

had his arm in a sling—a touching testimonial of his merits brought from the field of battle. He was the complete antipode of the J. L. Smiths and Joseph Cuttings who had preceded him, and who thought it a part of their democratic duty to be conspicuously vulgar. He did not seek to promote democracy by rendering it disgusting to all who held opposite opinions. He mingled in amicable intercourse with the citizens; sought interviews with the leading inhabitants—with the mayor of the city, and the governor of the state when he chanced to be on a visit there. I know he took counsel with my uncle and became acquainted with members of the Convention, and thus found means not only to smooth away the difficulties which had been engendered by his rude and reckless predecessors in the military command of that station, but gained correct information as to the actual state of things.

It was perfectly well understood, at this time, that he was not only a military officer, but that he was the diplomatic agent of the government at Washington, and communicated his observations to the Executive. He was not, for this reason, either shunned or depreciated. It is evident, from his letters sent almost daily to Madison—and the substance of which has transpired, at least in part—that the real intentions of the Convention were penetrated by him almost from the beginning. It is evident that he never found the slightest proof of treasonable intentions on the part

of that assembly.\* It has been reported that he intends publishing his personal memoirs, and that in these he will give some interesting revelations respecting the Convention: I trust he will fulfill his design, and I am equally confident that his report will be in unison with the views I have here presented. As a matter of principle—regarding it from his point of view—he will doubtless condemn that

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\* Mr. Ingersoll, in his history of the "Late War," professes to report the substance of Jesup's letters to the President: in one of these he says, among other things, that after an interview which he had with Gov. Tompkins, of New York, on his way to Hartford, he thinks the "Convention will complain, remonstrate, and probably address the people, but that its proceedings will neither result in an attempt to sunder the Union, nor in a determination to resist by force the measures of the general government."

This is sensible. Thus Col. Jesup, even before he reached Hartford, had discovered the actual state of things in New England. I can testify that, living in the very midst of the members of the Convention, I never heard such a thing as disunion advocated, or even suggested, as probable or possible. In confirmation of this, Mr. Ingersoll adds:

"Colonel Jesup soon ascertained that the Connecticut members of the Convention were opposed to disunion, to disorder; that every throb of the people's heart was American," &c., &c. Surely no sensible man needed a ghost to tell him that; and yet, strange to say, there are persons who still believe that the Convention, pushed on by the people of New England, were a band of traitors, at least in their hearts!

Mr. Ingersoll states that one member of the Convention—Chauneey Goodrich—listened favorably to Jesup's counterplot, which was, that New England should put her shoulder to the war, capture Halifax and the adjacent territories, and these, with Canada, should be annexed to New England! That the ardent young lieutenant-colonel should have made such a suggestion, is very possible, but those who knew the parties, will smile at the idea that a scheme so utterly preposterous—so hopeless in the actual state of the country, so opposed to public sentiment, so certain to protract and aggravate the war—should have been entertained for a moment by the far-sighted person to whom it was proposed. If such a plot was ever seriously suggested, it was no doubt respectfully listened to as a matter of courtesy, but in no other sense could it have been received.

assembly, but as to matters of fact, I am certain he will never furnish the slightest support to the charge of treason, either secret or open.

But I must draw this long letter to a close. The result of the Hartford Convention is well known. After a session of three weeks, it terminated its labors, and, in perfect conformity with public expectation and public sentiment at the North, it issued an address, full of loyalty to the Constitution, recommending patience to the people, and while admitting their grievances, still only suggesting peaceable and constitutional remedies. The authors of this document knew well the community for which it was intended: their purpose was to allay anxiety, to appease irritation, to draw off in harmless channels the lightning of public indignation. They therefore pointed out modes of relief, in the direction of peace, and not in the direction of civil war. They were federalists, as were the people who supported them; they belonged to that party who founded the Constitution, in opposition to the democracy.\* Leaving it for democracy, which opposed the Constitution in its cradle, to fur-

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\* The sincere seeker for truth should read the history of the parties of this period, in connection with their previous annals. "It is a remarkable fact," says Noah Webster, in his history of political parties in the United States, "that the democratic party, with few or no exceptions, opposed the ratification of the Constitution; and beyond a question, had that opposition succeeded, anarchy or civil war would have been the consequence. The federalists made the form of government, and with immense efforts procured it to be ratified, in opposition to nearly one-half of the citizens of the United States, headed by some of the ablest men in the Union."



nish the first examples of Nullification, Disunion, Secession—with a discretion and a patriotism which does them infinite credit—they found the means of removing the cloud from the minds of their constituents, and yet without in any degree shaking the pillars of the Union, which was their ark of the covenant of national honor and glory and prosperity.

It is said Mr. Madison laughed when he heard the result: it is very likely, for he had really feared that the Convention meditated treason; he perhaps felt a little uneasy in his conscience, from a conviction that his administration had afforded serious grounds for discontent. He, as well as those who shared his views, were no doubt relieved, when they found the cloud had passed. Some of the democratic editors satisfied themselves with squibs, and some found relief in railing. Those especially who had insisted that the Convention was a band of traitors, seemed to feel personally affronted that it did not fulfill their evil prophecies. There is perhaps no greater offense to a partisan who has predicted evil of his adversary, than for the latter to do what is right, and thus turn the railer into ridicule. At all events, so bitter was the disappointment of the fanatical portion of the democrats, on the occasion in question, that they sought relief in declaring that if the Convention did not act treason, they at least felt it! Perhaps in consideration of their disappointment, we may pass over this obliquity as one of those frailties of hu-



man nature, which time teaches us to forget and forgive.

As to the general effect of the course adopted by the Convention, no reasonable man can deny that it was eminently salutary. It immediately appeased the irritation and anxiety of the public mind in New England; it taught the people the propriety of calm and prudent measures in times of difficulty and danger; and more than all, it set an example worthy of being followed for all future time, by holding the Constitution of the United States as sacred, and by recommending the people to seek remedies for their grievances by legal and not by revolutionary means. "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall see God." I know of no similar benediction upon the promoters of civil war.

And now I have done. The treaty of Ghent speedily came to smooth the ruffled waters. Monroe succeeded to Madison, and an era of good feeling seemed to dawn upon the country. It is true the promised millennium was not fully realized: the dying flurries of the old federal party, under the harpooning of triumphant democracy, caused some froth upon the sea of politics. Connecticut passed through the spasms of Toleration, in which that hard old federalist, Oliver Wolcott, became the candidate of democracy, and overturned the Charter of Charles II., and with it all his early political associations—public and personal. It was a strange dance, and with a

curious arrangement of partners. Similar movements took place in other parts of the country—the result of which was, a new crystallization of parties, in which the terms federalist and democrat lost their original signification. I have before adverted to this fact, and have stated that—in application to present parties—they are little more than names to discriminate between conservatives and radicals.

I have thus deemed it due to truth, in giving my recollections of the war, to give them frankly and fearlessly. Believing the old federalists—especially those of Connecticut, for with them my acquaintance was personal—to have been honest and patriotic, as I knew them to be virtuous and wise, so I have said, and given my reasons for the faith that is in me. While doing them this justice, I do not affirm that in all things their measures were right. I contend, however, that they were true men, and, on the whole, have left memories behind them which every dictate of virtue and patriotism teaches us to cherish. By the side of their opponents—and the very best of them—they may claim at least equal respect. As time advances and the mists of party are cleared from the horizon, I doubt not their images will be seen and recognized by all, as rising higher and higher among the nobler monuments of our history. One truth will stand—they were of those who reared the glorious fabric of the Union, and under all circumstances taught the peo-

ple to regard it as sacred. Before any man presumes to call them traitors, let him see that his own hands are equally pure, his own spirit equally exalted.

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## LETTER XXXII.

*The Count Value—Lessons in French, and a Translation of René—Severe Retribution for Imprudence—The End of the Pocket-book Factory—Napoleon returns to Paris and upsets my Affairs—Divers Experiences and Reflections upon Dancing—Visit to New York—Oliver Wolcott and Archibald Gracie—Ballston and Saratoga—Dr. Payson and the three Rowdies—Illness and Death of my Uncle—Partnership with George Sheldon—His Illness and Death.*

MY DEAR C\*\*\*\*\*

I must now go back and take up a few dropped stitches in my narrative. I have told you that my apprenticeship terminated in the summer of 1814. Previous to that time, I had made some advances in the study of the French language under M. Value, or, to give him his title, the Count Value. This person had spent his early life in Paris, but he afterward migrated to St. Domingo, where he owned a large estate. In the insurrection of 1794, he escaped only with his life. With admirable cheerfulness and serenity, he devoted himself to teaching French and dancing, as means of support. He settled for a time at New Haven, where, at the age of seventy, he was captivated and captured by a tall, red-haired schoolmistress of twenty. She accounted to me, for

her success, by stating that, at the time, she was called the "Rose of Sharon"—she being a native of a town in Litchfield county bearing the latter name.

The Count finally established himself at Hartford, and I became one of his pupils. I pursued my studies with considerable assiduity, and to practice myself in French, I translated Chateaubriand's *René*. One of my friends had just established a newspaper at Middletown, and my translation was published there. About this time my health was feeble, and my eyes became seriously affected in consequence of my night studies. Unaware of the danger, I persevered, and thus laid the foundation of a nervous weakness and irritability of my eyes, which has since been to me a rock ahead in the whole voyage of life. From that time, I have never been able to read or write, but with pain. As if by a kind of fatality, I seemed to be afterward drawn into a literary career, for which I was doubly disqualified—first, by an imperfect education, and next, by defective eyesight. Oh! what penalties have I paid for thus persisting in a course which seems to have been forbidden to me by Providence. After a long and laborious life, I feel a profound consciousness that I have done nothing well; at the same time, days, months, nay years, have I struggled with the constant apprehension that I should terminate my career in blindness! How little do we know, especially in the outset of our existence, what is before us! It is indeed well that we

do not know, for the prospect would often overwhelm us.

In the autumn of 1814, as already stated, I established, in company with a friend, a pocket-book factory at Hartford; but the peace put a speedy termination to that enterprise. We got out of it with a small loss, and my kind-hearted partner pocketed this, "for he had money, and I had none." He forgave me, and would have done the same, had the defalcation been more considerable—for he was a true friend.

Early in the following spring, I made an arrangement to go to Paris as a clerk in a branch of the importing house of Richards, Taylor & Wilder, of New York. About a month after, the news came that Bonaparte had suddenly returned from Elba, and as business was prostrated by that event, my engagement failed. For nearly a year, my health continued indifferent, and my eyes in such a state that I was incapable of undertaking any serious business. I spent my time partly at Berlin,\* with my parents, and partly at Hart-

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\* I have already said that my father, having asked a dismission from his parochial charge at Ridgefield, was settled—1811—in Berlin, eleven miles south of Hartford. It is a pleasant village, situated on a slight elevation, rising from a fertile valley, bounded on the south by a range of mountains. The town embraces three parishes, which, thirty years ago, were the principal seat of the tin manufacture, from which the whole country was long supplied by peddlers. The arts of these became proverbial; not confining themselves to the sale of tin-ware, they occasionally peddled other articles. In the Southern States, it is pretended, they palmed off upon the people "wooden nutmegs," "oak-leaf cigars," &c.

Berlin was the birthplace of Isaac Riley—a noted bookseller of New York—forty years ago. He was a man of fine personal address and

ford. I read a little, and practiced my French with Value and his scholars. I also felt the need of disciplining my hands and feet, which about these days seemed to me to have acquired a most absurd development—giving me an awful feeling of embarrassment when I entered into company. I therefore took lessons in dancing, and whether I profited by it or not, as to manners, I am persuaded that this portion of my education was highly beneficial to me in other points of view.

As many good people have a prejudice against dancing, I am disposed to write down my experience on the subject. In the winter, our good old teacher had weekly cotillion parties, for the purpose of practicing his scholars. The young men invited the young ladies, and took them to these gatherings, and after the exercises, conducted them home again. I know this will sound strange to those who only understand metropolitan manners at the present day; but let me tell you that I never knew an instance, in my own experience or observation, in which the strictest propriety was departed from. These parties took

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striking intellectual activity, but was marked with great vicissitudes of fortune. One of the Berlin peddlers, by the name of B . . . , chanced to be at one of Riley's book-auction sales, when he bid off a thousand copies of a cheap edition of Young's Night Thoughts. These he peddled in the South and West as *bad books*, getting five dollars apiece for them! When remonstrated with for imposition, he insisted that it was a good moral and religious operation!

At the present day, New Britain, one of the parishes of Berlin, is noted for extensive brass and iron foundries, and various other manufactures.

place in the evening: they began at eight o'clock, and continued till ten or eleven—sometimes till twelve. The company consisted entirely of young persons—from fifteen to twenty years of age: they included the children of the respectable inhabitants, with a number of young ladies from the boarding-schools. Some of these I have since seen the wives of bishops, senators, and governors of States—filling indeed the first stations to which the sex can aspire in this country.

I have had enough experience of the world to know that such things could not be in the great cities of Europe or America—perhaps nowhere out of New England. The division of society into castes in monarchical countries, no doubt involves the necessity of keeping young ladies jealously aloof from companionship with the other sex, because they might entangle themselves in engagements which would defeat the system of building up families and estates by politic marriages. In this state of society, it might be found dangerous for young persons of opposite sexes to be left even casually together, for a spirit of intrigue is always indigenous under a system of restraint and espionage. But however this may be, I am satisfied that these Hartford parties, under the auspices of our amiable and respectable old teacher, were every way refining and elevating: not only did they impart ease of manner, but, as I think, purity of sentiment. The earlier emotions of youth are delicate,



modest, conservative ; and if acquaintance with life be made at this period, these stamp their refinements upon the feelings, and form a safe, conservative basis of future habits of thought and conduct. I do not mean to favor latitudinarianism of manners ; I do not, indeed, say that this system can be adopted in large cities, but I believe that dancing parties, consisting of young persons of both sexes, under proper guidance—as, for instance, under the eye of parents, either in a public hall, or by the domestic fireside—have a refining influence, beneficial alike to manners and morals. I believe that even public assemblies for dancing, regulated by the presence of good people, are eminently useful.

I have been in Catholic countries, where the system is to keep girls in cloisters, or schools resembling them, till they are taken out by their parents or guardians to be married ; and it is precisely in these countries, where education is the most jealous, and discipline the most rigorous, that intrigue is the great game of life—especially with the upper classes—of both sexes. I have seen society where Puritan ideas prevailed, and where religious people held dancing to be a device of the devil ; and here I have often found that practices, secret or open, quite as exceptionable as dancing, were current in society. If in the earlier ages of our New England history, a hard, self-denying system was profitable, it is not so in the present state of society. We are created with social

feelings, which demand indulgence. No system of religion, no code or contrivance of state policy, has been able to get over this fact. We can not kill the voice of God and nature in the soul: we can only regulate it, and by using common sense and the lights of religion, give it a safe and beneficent development. Is it not time for society to cast off prejudice, and to be governed by truth and experience? It must be remembered that what is condemned by the good and wise, often thereby becomes evil, though in itself it may be beneficial. Has not this wrong been done among us? It seems to me that good people, pious people, may at least inquire whether it may not be well for them to take under their patronage, that branch of education which proposes at once to perfect the manners and refine the sentiments of youth. It is not to dictate, but to aid in this inquiry, that I give you with some minuteness my observations on this subject; hence I offer you my testimony to the fact that in the course of three winters, during which I attended these cotillion parties at Hartford, I never saw or heard of an instance of impropriety in word or deed.

Let me further suggest that there is a principle here which it is important to recognize and appreciate. These young people were brought together at a period when their emotions were still sheltered in the folds of that sensitive and shrinking modesty, designed to protect them at the period of their first adventure

into mixed society. This modesty is to the heart of youth, like the envelope in which nature enshrines the choicest products of the vegetable kingdom, till they are ripened and prepared for the harvest. This shrinking delicacy of feeling is conservative; to this, license is offensive, and if suggested, is repelled. If young people associate together at this period—under the restraints which necessarily exist in an assembly such as I am contemplating—habits of delicacy, in thought and manner, are likely to be established. A person who has been thus trained, seems to me armed, in some degree at least, against those coarse seductions which degrade, and at last destroy, so many young persons of both sexes. To young men, an early familiarity with the refined portion of the gentler sex, placing them at ease in their society and making this a sort of necessity to them, I conceive to be one of the greatest safeguards to their morals and manners in after life. And as a preparation for this—as an introduction, an inducement to this—I conceive that the art of dancing, practiced by young people of both sexes, together, is to be commended.

I am aware that I am treading upon delicate ground. You may share the idea entertained by many good, pious people, that dancing is always degrading and vicious in its tendencies. This, however, I think, arises from considering it in its abuses. I am not contending for juvenile balls, as a pursuit fit to absorb the whole thought and attention. Remember,

I am speaking of dancing as a part of education—to be conducted with propriety—in order to train young people of both sexes to habits of easy and delicate intercourse. As to the practice of dancing, afterward, this must be regulated by the judgment of parents. One custom may be proper in one place, and not in another. In this country, our habits are different from those of others: in Asia, where woman is designed for the harem, and in Europe, where she is trained to be the make-weight of a bargain, jealousy becomes the sentinel of society; in the United States, woman is comparatively free, and here confidence must be the guardian of society. I am inclined to think, in this respect, our system has the advantage, provided it be not abused by license on the one hand, nor bigotry on the other.

In respect to the case I am describing in my early experience, in which the young gentlemen conducted the young ladies to and from the dancing hall—the confidence of parents, thus reposed in their children, fortified and recommended by the purer suggestions of the heart—appealed to motives of honor, and was usually responded to by scrupulous rectitude of demeanor. If you doubt the justice of this philosophy, I ask your attention to the fact that, at this day—forty years subsequent to the period to which I refer—in this very city of Hartford, with a population of twenty thousand people, women, young and old, of all classes, walk the streets till midnight, with as

much sense of security and propriety, as at noonday! Where will you find higher evidence of a refined state of society than this?

In the spring of 1815 I paid a visit to New York, and having letters of introduction to Oliver Wolcott and Archibald Gracie, I called on these gentlemen. Mr. Wolcott lived in Pine-street, nearly opposite where the custom-house is now, and at a short distance was John Wells, an eminent lawyer of that day. But a considerable number of the higher aristocracy was gathered toward the lower part of the city, the Battery being pretty nearly the focus of fashion. Streets now desecrated by the odor of tar and turpentine, were then filled with the flush and the fair. Nath'l Prime lived at No. 1 Broadway; Mr. Gracie in the Octagon House, corner of Bridge and State streets. Near by was his son-in-law, Charles King, now president of Columbia College, and his son, Wm. Gracie, who had married the second daughter of Oliver Wolcott. In this quarter, also, were Wm. Bayard, Gen. Morton, Matthew Clarkson, J. B. Coles, Moses Rogers, &c., all eminent citizens.

My lodgings were at the City Hotel, situated on the western side of Broadway, between Thames and Cedar streets—the space being now occupied by warehouses. It was then the Astor House of New York, being kept by a model landlord, whose name was Jennings, with a model barkeeper by the name of Willard. The latter was said never to sleep—night or day—for at all hours he was at his post, and never

forgot a customer, even after an absence of twenty years.

It was late in the spring, and Mr. Gracie called for me and took me to his country-seat, occupying a little promontory on the western side of Hurlgate—a charming spot, now cut up into some thirty city lots. Contiguous to it, toward the city, were the summer residences of J. J. Astor, Nathaniel Prime, and Wm. Rhinelanders; on the other side were the seats of Commodore Chauncey, Joshua Jones, and others.

Here I spent a fortnight very agreeably. Mr. Gracie was at this period distinguished alike on account of his wealth, his intelligence, and his amiable and honorable character. Never have I witnessed any thing more charming—more affectionate, dignified, and graceful—than the intercourse of the family with one another. The sons and daughters, most of them happily connected in marriage—as they gathered here—seemed, to my unpracticed imagination, to constitute a sort of dynasty, something like the romance of the middle ages. Not many years after, Mr. Gracie lost his entire fortune by the vicissitudes of commerce, but his character was beyond the reach of accident. He is still remembered with affectionate respect by all those whose memories reach back to the times in which he flourished, and when it might be said, without disparagement to any other man, that he was the first merchant in New York.

I must not omit to mention two other celebrities

whom I saw during this visit to New York. You must recollect I was on my travels, and so, as in duty bound, I sought to see the lions. Of course I went to the court-house, and there I saw two remarkable men—Judge Kent, and Thomas Addis Emmet—the first, chancellor of the State of New York, and the latter one of the most eminent lawyers in the city, perhaps in the United States.

Judge Kent\* I had seen before, at my uncle's house. He had been educated at Yale College, was my father's classmate, and formed an early acquaintance with our family, resulting in a friendly intercourse which was maintained throughout his whole life. It would be difficult now to point to a man so universally honored and esteemed. To the most extensive learning, he added a winning simplicity of manners and transparent truthfulness of character. All this was written in his countenance, at once irresistible by its beaming intelligence, and its not less impressive benevolence. The greatness and goodness of his character shone full in his face.

I remember perfectly well the scene, when I saw Emmet† and the judge together. The former was

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\* James Kent was born in Putnam county, N. Y., 1763. He rose to eminence in the profession of the law, and was appointed by John Jay, then governor, judge of the supreme court. He was afterward chief-justice, and, in 1814, chancellor. He died in New York, which had been his residence, in 1847—an ornament to human nature, to the bar, the bench, and the Christian profession.

† Thomas Addis Emmet, a native of Cork, in Ireland, was born in 1764. He was one of the Committee of the Society of United Irishmen,



arguing a case, but there were only half a dozen persons present, and it was rather a conversation than a plea. Emmet was a somewhat short but very athletic man, with large, rosy cheeks, an enormous mouth, and full, expressive eyes. His Irish brogue, rich and sonorous, rolled from his lips like a cataract of music. Kent listened, but frequently changed position, and often broke into the argument with a question, which sometimes resulted in a dialogue. His whole manner was easy, familiar, and very different from the statue-like dignity of other judges I had seen. The whole spectacle left on my mind the impression that two great men were rather consulting together, than that one was attempting to win from the other an opinion to suit an interested client. I recollect to have seen, listening to this discussion, a large, florid, handsome man, with a dark, eloquent eye; I inquired his name, and was told that it was John Wells, the renowned lawyer, already mentioned.

As I thus saw the lions of the town, I also heard the thunderers of the pulpit. On one occasion I listened to a discourse from Dr. J. B. Romeyn\*—a tall, thin, eloquent man—I think in Cedar-street. He was celebrated in his day; and, if I understood him cor-

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and was involved in the unfortunate rebellion of 1798. Mr. Emmet was imprisoned, but was finally set free, and came to the United States. His great learning, his extraordinary talents, his powerful eloquence, soon gave him a place among the first lawyers of the country. He died in 1827.

\* John B. Romeyn was settled first at Rhinebeck, then at Schenectady, and finally at New York. He was born in 1769, and died 1825.

rectly, he maintained the doctrine of election in such rigor as to declare that if he knew who the elect were, he would preach only to them, inasmuch as it would be useless to preach to other persons!

In a new church in Murray-street, I heard Dr. Mason,\* then regarded as the Boanerges of the city. Instead of a pulpit—which serves as a sort of shelter and defense for the preacher—he had only a little railing along the edge of the platform on which he stood, so as to show his large and handsome person, almost down to his shoe-buckles. He preached without notes, and moved freely about, sometimes speaking in a colloquial manner, and then suddenly pouring out sentence after sentence, glowing with lightning and echoing with thunder. The effect of these outbursts was sometimes very startling. The doctor was not only very imposing in his person, but his voice was of prodigious volume and compass. He was sometimes adventurous in his speech, occasionally passing off a joke, and not unfrequently

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\* John M. Mason, D. D.—son of Dr. John Mason of the Scotch Church—was born in 1770, and died in 1829. He was alike distinguished for his wit, his intellectual powers, and his eloquence. He was the author of several religious works of great ability. I have heard the following anecdote of him: A certain parishioner of his, after the establishment of a Unitarian church in New York, joined it. One day, when the Doctor chanced to meet him, the former said—

“Mr. S . . . , it is some time since I have seen you at Murray-street.”

“I have not been there lately, it is true,” was the reply—“and I will tell you the reason. I think you make religion too difficult; I prefer rather to travel on a turnpike, than on a rough and thorny road.”

“Yes,” said the Doctor; “but you must look out, and see that you don’t have a Hell of a toll to pay!”

verging on what might seem profane, but for the solemnity of his manner. When I heard him, in speaking of some recent Unitarian point of faith, he said, "This is damnable doctrine—I say it is damnable doctrine!"—the deep, guttural emphasis giving to the repetition a thrilling effect.

Early in the ensuing summer, my uncle, Chauncey Goodrich, being in bad health, paid a visit to Saratoga\* and Ballston for the benefit of the waters, and I accompanied him. We soon returned, however, for

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\* I remember a striking incident which occurred at the hotel in Saratoga where we lodged. One Sunday morning, as the company sat down to breakfast at a long table, a small, dark, and rather insignificant looking minister said grace. As soon as he began, and his voice attracted notice, most of the persons gave respectful attention to his words; but three gay young men took pains to signify their superiority to such a vulgar custom by clashing the knives and forks, calling upon the waiters, and proceeding to their work. After breakfast, a notice was given to the lodgers that a sermon would be preached in the dining-hall at 10 o'clock. At this hour the lodgers generally gathered there, and among them the three young men—these, however, with a decided Gallio air and manner. Indeed, it was pretty evident that they had come to quiz the little parson. The latter soon entered, with a peculiarly noiseless unostentatious step and demeanor. He sat down and meditated for a few minutes, and then rose to pray. The first tones of his voice were faint, but they grew in strength; and as we took our seats, all began to look with strange interest upon the countenance of that little, dark, unpretending preacher. He read a familiar hymn, but it seemed new and striking; he read a familiar chapter in the Bible, but it had a depth and meaning not realized before. He took his text, and preached such a sermon as seldom falls from the lips of man. Every heart was thrilled, and even the three young men who came to scoff, remained to pray. Never have I seen such alternations of feelings as passed over their countenances—first of ridicule, then of astonishment, then of shame, and at last, of consternation and contrition. "And who is this strange man—so insignificant in appearance, so seemingly inspired in fact?" said the people. It was Edward Payson, afterwards D. D., of Portland, one of the most pious, devoted, and eloquent ministers of his day. He was born at Rindge, in New Hampshire, in 1783, and died in 1827.

it was now apparent that he had a disease of the heart, which was rapidly tending to a fatal result. Experiencing great suffering at intervals, he gradually yielded to the progress of his malady, and at last, on the 18th of August, 1815—while walking the room, and engaged in cheerful conversation—he faltered, sank into a chair, and instantly expired. “His death,” says the historian, “was a shock to the whole community. Party distinctions were forgotten, under a sense of the general calamity; and in the simple but expressive language which was used at his funeral, ‘all united in a tribute of respect to the man who had so long been dear to us, and done us so much good.’” To me, the loss was irreparable—leaving, however, in my heart a feeling of gratitude that I had witnessed an example of the highest intellectual power united with the greatest moral excellence—and that, too, in one whose relationship to me enforced and commended its teachings to my special observance. Alas, how little have I done in life that is worthy of such inspiration!

Not long after this, my friend George Sheldon having established himself as a bookseller and publisher, he invited me to become his partner—and this I did, early in the year 1816. We pursued the business for nearly two years, during which time we published, among other works, Scott’s Family Bible, in five volumes quarto—a considerable enterprise for that period, in a place like Hartford. In the autumn of

1817 I had gone to Berlin, for the purpose of making a short excursion for the benefit of my health, when a messenger came from Hartford, saying that my partner was very ill, and wished me to return. I immediately complied, and on entering the room of my friend, I found him in a high fever, his mind already wandering in painful dreams. As I came to his bedside he said—"Oh, take away these horrid knives; they cut me to the heart!" I stooped over him and said—

"There are no knives here; you are only dreaming."

"Oh, is it you?" said he. "I am glad you have come. Do stay with me, and speak to me, so as to keep off these dreadful fancies."

I did stay by him for four days and nights—but his doom was sealed. His mind continued in a state of wild delirium till a few minutes before his death. I stood gazing at his face, when a sudden change came over him: the agitated and disturbed look of insanity had passed—a quiet pallor had come over his countenance, leaving it calm and peaceful. He opened his eyes, and, as if waking from sleep, looked on me with an aspect of recognition. His lips moved, and he pronounced the name of his wife; she came, with all the feelings of youth and love—aye, and of hope, too, in her heart. She bent over him: he raised his feeble and emaciated arms and clasped her to his heart: he gave her one kiss, and passed to another life!

## LETTER XXXIII.

*The Famine of 1816 and 1817—Panic in New England—Migrations to Ohio—T'other Side of Ohio—Toleration—Downfall of Federalism—Oliver Wolcott and the Democracy—Connecticut upset—The new Constitution—Gov. Smith and Gov. Wolcott—Litchfield—Uriah Tracey—Frederick Wolcott—Tapping Reeve—Col. Talmadge—James Gould—J. W. Huntington—The Litchfield Centennial Celebration.*

MY DEAR C\*\*\*\*\*

I must now ask your attention to several topics having no connection, except unity of time and place: the cold seasons of 1816 and 1817, and the consequent flood of emigration from New England to the West; the political revolution in Connecticut, which was wrought in the magic name of Toleration, and one or two items of my personal experience.

The summer of 1816 was probably the coldest that has been known here, in this century. In New England—from Connecticut to Maine—there were severe frosts in every month. The crop of Indian corn was almost entirely cut off: of potatoes, hay, oats, &c., there was not probably more than half the usual supply. The means of averting the effects of such a calamity—now afforded by railroads, steam navigation, canals, and other facilities of intercommunication—did not then exist. The following winter was severe, and the ensuing spring backward. At this time I made a journey into New Hampshire, pass-

ing along the Connecticut river, in the region of Hanover. It was then June, and the hills were almost as barren as in November. I saw a man at Orford, who had been forty miles for a half bushel of Indian corn, and paid two dollars for it!

Along the seaboard it was not difficult to obtain a supply of food, save only that every article was dear. In the interior it was otherwise: the cattle died for want of fodder, and many of the inhabitants came near perishing from starvation. The desolating effects of the war still lingered over the country, and at last a kind of despair seized upon some of the people. In the pressure of adversity, many persons lost their judgment, and thousands feared or felt that New England was destined, henceforth, to become a part of the frigid zone. At the same time, Ohio—with its rich soil, its mild climate, its inviting prairies—was opened fully upon the alarmed and anxious vision. As was natural under the circumstances, a sort of stampede took place from cold, desolate, worn-out New England, to this land of promise.

I remember very well the tide of emigration through Connecticut, on its way to the West, during the summer of 1817. Some persons went in covered wagons—frequently a family consisting of father, mother, and nine small children, with one at the breast—some on foot and some crowded together under the cover, with kettles, gridirons, feather-beds, crockery, and the family Bible, Watts' Psalms and Hymns, and Webster's



Spelling-book—the lares and penates of the household. Others started in ox-carts, and trudged on at the rate of ten miles a day. In several instances I saw families on foot—the father and boys taking turns in dragging along an improvised hand-wagon, loaded with the wreck of the household goods—occasionally giving the mother and baby a ride. Many of these persons were in a state of poverty, and begged their way as they went. Some died before they reached the expected Canaan; many perished after their arrival, from fatigue and privation; and others, from the fever and ague, which was then certain to attack the new settlers.

It was, I think, in 1818, that I published a small tract, entitled “T’other side of Ohio”—that is, the other view, in contrast to the popular notion that it was the paradise of the world. It was written by Dr. Hand—a talented young physician of Berlin—who had made a visit to the West about these days. It consisted mainly of vivid but painful pictures of the accidents and incidents attending this wholesale migration. The roads over the Alleghanies, between Philadelphia and Pittsburg, were then rude, steep, and dangerous, and some of the more precipitous slopes were consequently strewn with the carcasses of wagons, carts, horses, oxen, which had made shipwreck in their perilous descents. The scenes on the road—of families gathered at night in miserable sheds, called taverns—mothers frying, children cry-

ing, fathers swearing—were a mingled comedy and tragedy of errors. Even when they arrived in their new homes—along the banks of the Muskingum or the Scioto—frequently the whole family—father, mother, children—speedily exchanged the fresh complexion and elastic step of their first abodes, for the sunken cheek and languid movement, which marks the victim of intermittent fever.

The instances of home-sickness, described by this vivid sketcher, were touching. Not even the captive Israelites, who hung their harps upon the willows along the banks of the Euphrates, wept more bitter tears, or looked back with more longing to their native homes, than did these exiles from New England—mourning the land they had left, with its roads, schools, meeting-houses—its hope, health, and happiness! Two incidents, related by the traveler, I must mention—though I do it from recollection, as I have not a copy of the work. He was one day riding in the woods, apart from the settlements, when he met a youth, some eighteen years of age, in a hunting-frock, and with a fowling-piece in his hand. The two fell into conversation.

“Where are you from?” said the youth, at last.

“From Connecticut,” was the reply.

“That is near the old Bay State?”

“Yes.”

“And have you been there?”

“To Massachusetts? Yes, many a time.”

"Let me take your hand, stranger. My mother was from the Bay State, and brought me here when I was an infant. I have heard her speak of it. Oh, it must be a lovely land! I wish I could see a meeting-house and a school-house, for she is always talking about them. And the sea—the sea—oh, if I could see that! Did you ever see it, stranger?"

"Yes, often."

"What, the real, salt sea—the ocean—with the ships upon it?"

"Yes."

"Well"—said the youth, scarcely able to suppress his emotion—"if I could see the old Bay State and the ocean, I should be willing then to die!"

In another instance the traveler met—somewhere in the valley of the Scioto—a man from Hartford, by the name of Bull. He was a severe democrat, and feeling sorely oppressed with the idea that he was no better off in Connecticut under federalism than the Hebrews in Egypt, joined the throng and migrated to Ohio. He was a man of substance, but his wealth was of little avail in a new country, where all the comforts and luxuries of civilization were unknown.

"When I left Connecticut," said he, "I was wretched from thinking of the sins of federalism. After I had got across Byram river, which divides that State from New York, I knelt down and thanked the Lord for that he had brought me and mine out of such a priest-ridden land. But I've been well punished,

and I'm now preparing to return ; when I again cross Byram river, I shall thank God that he has permitted me to get back again !”

Mr. Bull did return, and what he hardly anticipated had taken place in his absence : the federal dynasty had passed away, and democracy was reigning in its stead ! This was effected by a union of all the dissenting sects—Episcopalians, Methodists, Baptists—co-operating with the democrats to overthrow the old and established order of things. Up to this period, Connecticut had no other constitution than the colonial charter granted by Charles II. This was a meager instrument, but long usage had supplied its deficiencies, and the State had, practically, all the functions of a complete political organization. It had begun in Puritanism, and even now, as I have elsewhere stated—notwithstanding gradual modifications—the old Congregational orthodoxy still held many privileges, some traditionary and some statutory. Yale College—an institution of the highest literary standing—had been from the beginning, in its influence, a religious seminary in the hands of the Congregational clergy. The State had not only chartered it, but had endowed and patronized it. And besides, the statute-book continued to give preference to this sect, compelling all persons to pay taxes to it, unless they should declare their adhesion to some other persuasion.

All this was incompatible with ideas and interests

that had now sprung up in the community. The Episcopalians had become a large and powerful body, and though they were generally federalists, they now clamored—as an offset to the endowments of Yale College—for a sum of money to lay the foundation of a “Bishops’ Fund.” The Methodists and Baptists had discovered that the preference given to orthodoxy, was a union of Church and State, and that the whole administration was but the dark and damning machinery of privileged priestcraft. To all these sources of discontent, the democracy added the hostility which it had ever felt toward federalism—now intensely embittered by the aggravations of the war and the Hartford Convention.

It was clear that the doom of federalism was at hand, even in Connecticut. Many things had conspired to overthrow it in other parts of the country. Jefferson had saddled it, in the popular mind, with a tendency to monarchy and a partiality for England—a burden which it was hard to bear—especially near the revolutionary period, when the hearts of the people still beat with gratitude to France and aggravated hostility to Great Britain. John Adams, the candidate of the federalists, gave great strength to this charge by his conduct, and having thus nearly broken down his supporters, did what he could to complete their destruction, by at last going over to the enemy. John Quincy Adams followed in the footsteps of his father. Washington was early withdrawn from the scene of

action: Hamilton was shot: Burr proved treacherous and infamous. The pillars of federalism were shaken, and at the same time two mighty instruments were at work for its final overthrow. The great body of the people had got possession of suffrage, and insisted, with increasing vehemence, upon the removal of every impediment to its universality. The conservatives, in such a contest, were sure to be at last overwhelmed, and this issue was not long delayed. One thing more—the foreign element in our population, augmenting every year, was almost wholly democratic. Democracy in Europe is the watchword of popular liberty; the word is in all modern languages, the idea in all existing masses. This name was now assumed by the radical or republican party, and to its standard, as a matter of course, the great body of the European immigrants—little instructed in our history or our institutions—spontaneously flocked, by the force of instinct and prepossession. And still further—as I have before intimated, nearly all foreigners hate England, and in this respect they found a ready and active sympathy with the democratic party—the federalists being of course charged with the damning sin of love for that country and its institutions.

To these and other general influences, which had shattered the federal party in the Southern and Middle States, was now added, in Connecticut, the local difficulties founded in sectarian discontent. But it is probable that a revolution could not have been speed-

ily consummated, but for an adventitious incident. Oliver Wolcott, who had been one of Washington's cabinet, and of the strictest sect of federalism, had resided some years in New York, where he had acquired a handsome fortune by commercial pursuits. For a number of years he had taken no part in politics, though I believe he had rather given support to the war. No doubt he disapproved of the course of the federalists, for I remember that shortly before the Hartford Convention he was at my uncle's house—the two being brothers-in-law—as I have before stated. In allusion to the coming assembly, I recollect to have heard him say, interrogatively—

“Well, brother Goodrich, I hope you are not about to breed any mischief?”

“Sir,” said my uncle, somewhat rebukingly, “you know me too well to make it necessary to ask that question!”

I recollect at a later period, when he was governor of Connecticut, to have heard him speak reproachfully of both political parties in New York. Said he—

“After living a dozen years in that State, I don't pretend to comprehend their politics. It is a labyrinth of wheels within wheels, and is understood only by the managers. Why, these leaders of the opposite parties, who—in the papers and before the world—seem ready to tear each other's eyes out, will meet some rainy night in a dark entry, and agree, whichever way the election goes, they will share the spoils together!”



At all events, about this time Oliver Wolcott removed to Litchfield, his native place, and in 1817 was nominated for governor by the malcontents of all parties, rallying under the name of Toleration. To show the violent nature of the fusion which united such contradictory elements into one homogeneous mass, it may be well to quote here an extract from a Connecticut democratic organ—the *American Mercury*. This paper, with others, had charged Oliver Wolcott with burning down the War and Treasury Departments at Philadelphia, in order to cover up the iniquities he had committed while Secretary of War. The following was its language, Feb. 3, 1801:

“An evening paper asks the editor for his knowledge: the editors of that paper, if they will apply to Israel Israel, Esq., may have full and perfect knowledge of the accounts published. To conceal fraud and rob the public; to conceal dilapidation and plunder, while the public are paying enormous interest for money to support wicked and unnecessary measures; to conceal as much as possible the amount and names of the robbers, and the plans and evidences of the villainy—these the editor believes to have been the true causes of the conflagration. When did it take place? At the dusk of night, and in the rooms in which the books were kept, in which were contained the registers of public iniquity!”

A short time after this—February 26—the same paper copies from the *Philadelphia Aurora* an article, of which the following are extracts:

“The Honorable Mr. Wolcott, ex-Secretary of the Treasury, successor to the virtuous Hamilton and predecessor to the equal-

ly virtuous Dexter, has lately honored our city with his presence. Having done enough for his ungrateful country, he is retiring to the place from whence he came, to enjoy the *otium cum dignitate*. It is to be hoped he will have enough of the former, to afford him an opportunity of nursing what little he has of the latter.

“This representative of Mr. Hamilton was very fortunate in escaping the federal bonfires at Washington; even his papers and private property were *providentially* saved—but his fair fame sustained a *slight singeing* between the two fires: his friends in Congress, it is presumed, will pass a vote which shall operate as a cataplasm to the burn.

“Our federal worthies, justly appreciating the services of this valuable man, and wisely considering that nothing can afford more pleasure than eating or drinking, resolved to treat him to a dinner; and as it is proper the world should know that Mr. Wolcott had something to eat in Philadelphia, their proceedings on the occasion, at least such parts of them as will bear the light, are published in the federal prints.”

Such were the opinions—at least such were the representations — of the leading democratic organs, respecting Oliver Wolcott, the federalist, in 1801. In 1817, he was the champion of the democratic party in Connecticut, and the idol of the American Mercury! What transformations are equal to those which the history of political parties, for the short space of twenty years, brings to our view?

It is needless to tell you in detail what immediately followed. The struggle was one of the most violent that was ever witnessed in Connecticut. It was curious as well as violent—for we saw fighting side by side, shoulder to shoulder, democracy, Methodism,

Episcopacy, Pedobaptism, Universalism, radicalism, infidelity—all united for the overthrow of federalism and orthodoxy; and Oliver Wolcott was the leader in this onset! The election took place in April, 1817, and the federalists were routed, according to the established phrase, "horse, foot, and dragoons." John Cotton Smith,\* the most popular man in the State,

\* John Cotton Smith was born in 1765, became member of Congress in 1800, where he remained six years. Being a federalist, he was nearly the whole time in the minority, yet such were his character and address, that he presided more frequently, and with more success, over the House, when in Committee of the Whole, than any other member. "To the lofty bearing of a Roman senator," says the historian, "he added a gentleness so conciliating and persuasive, that the spirit of discord fled abashed from his presence."

He was my mother's cousin, and I saw him several times at our house. He was tall, slender, and graceful in form and manner. His hair, a little powdered, was turned back with a queue, and a slight friz over the ears. His dress was of the olden time—with breeches, black silk stockings, and shoe-buckles. His address was an extraordinary mixture of dignity and gentle persuasive courtesy. He was made judge of the Superior Court in 1809, and soon after lieutenant-governor; in 1812, he became acting-governor, upon the death of the lamented Griswold. In 1813, he was elected governor, and led the State through the war, and until 1817, when he was defeated by the election of Wolcott.

Governor Smith was the last of those stately, courtly Christian gentlemen of the "Old School," who presided over Connecticut: with him passed away the dignity of white-top boots, queues, powder, and pomatum. His successor, Oliver Wolcott, though a federalist in the days of Washington, was never courtly in his manners. He was simple, direct, almost abrupt in his address, with a crisp brevity and pithiness of speech. His personal appearance and manner, contrasting with those of his predecessors, represented well enough the change of politics which his accession to the gubernatorial chair indicated.

Governor Smith was the first president of the Connecticut Bible Society, President of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, President of the American Bible Society, and received from Yale College the degree of LL.D. He lived at Sharon with patriarchal liberality and dignity, to the age of eighty, where he died, beloved and honored by all who knew him

was defeated : federalism was in the dust, toleration was triumphant !

I remember that at that time, William L. Stone was editor of the Connecticut Mirror. Nearly the whole paper, immediately preceding the election, was filled with pungent matter. I think I filled a column or two myself. The feelings of the federalists were very much wrought up, but after it was all over, they took it good-naturedly. A new Constitution for the State—1818—and a very good one, was the first fruit of the revolution. Wolcott continued governor for ten years, and taking a moderate course, in the end, satisfied reasonable men of both parties. He was no radical, and inasmuch as a political change in Connecticut was inevitable, it is probable that no better man could have been found, to lead the people through the emergency.\*

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\* Oliver Wolcott was the third governor of Connecticut in a direct line from father to son. Roger, his grandfather, was a native of Windsor, born in 1679 and died in 1767. He was a clever author, a conspicuous Christian, and governor of his native State from 1751 to 1754. His son, Oliver W., was born about 1727. He was a member of Congress in 1776, when the Declaration of Independence was made. Barlow, in his *Columbiad*, thus speaks of him :

“ Bold Wolcott urged the all-important cause—  
With steady hand the solemn scene he draws ;  
Undaunted firmness with his wisdom join’d—  
Nor kings, nor worlds, could warp his steadfast mind.”

He was elected governor in 1796, but died the next year.

His son Oliver was born 1759, and became Secretary of the Treasury, under Washington, upon the retirement of Hamilton, in 1795. He was continued in this office till the close of Adams's administration. After twelve years of public service, he retired, with but six hundred dollars in his pocket ! He devoted himself to commerce in New York from 1801 to 1815. His correspondence, in two volumes octavo, has been

During the period in which Oliver Wolcott was governor, I was several times at Litchfield, and often at his house. My sister, Mrs. Cooke, had married his brother, Frederick Wolcott, living in the old family

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published by his grandson Gibbs, and is a valuable and interesting work. When he ceased to be governor, he returned to New York, where he died, in 1833. He was an able statesman, possessed of considerable literary attainments, and in conversation was full of sagacity, wit, and keen observations upon the world.

His sister, Maryanne, wife of Chauncey Goodrich—born 1765—was one of the most accomplished women of her time. A portrait of her—though doing no justice to her beauty—is given in Dr. Griswold's "Republican Court." It is among the household anecdotes of the family, that during the Revolution, a leaden statue of George III. was taken from New York to Litchfield, and there cast into bullets, and that these were formed into cartridges by this lady and others in the neighborhood, for the army. I never saw her, as she died in 1805, before I went to Hartford.

Of Frederick Wolcott, my brother-in-law, I find the following obituary notice in the Philadelphia United States Gazette, July 11, 1837:

"Died on the 28th of June, at his residence in Litchfield, Conn., in the 70th year of his age, the Hon. Frederick Wolcott, one of the most distinguished citizens of that State: a patriot of the old school, a gentleman of great moral and intellectual worth, a sincere, humble, consistent Christian. It has been well said of Judge Wolcott, that he was one of 'nature's noblemen.' They who knew him personally, will appreciate the correctness and significance of the remark. His noble form, dignified yet affable and endearing manners, intelligence and purity of character, magnanimity of soul and useful life, were in grand and harmonious keeping, uniting to make him distinguished among men—greatly respected, beloved, and honored.

"Judge Wolcott was descended from one of the most eminent families in New England, being the son of Oliver Wolcott, former governor of Connecticut and one of the immortal signers of the Declaration of Independence, and grandson of Roger Wolcott, a still former governor of that State, who, together with the late Gov. Oliver Wolcott, Secretary of the Treasury under Washington's administration, and brother of the deceased, were lineal descendants of Henry Wolcott, an English gentleman of Tolland, in Somersetshire, who came to this country in 1628, and soon after undertook the first settlement in Connecticut, at Windsor. After graduating at Yale College, at an early age, with the highest honors of his class, Mr. Wolcott directed his studies to the law, and was soon called to various offices of important civil trust, the chief of which he held through every fluctuation of party, during a long life. His

mansion near by, and as I have intimated, my uncle, Chauncey Goodrich, had married his sister—thus making a double connection in the family. Uriah Tracy,\* one of the most distinguished men in the

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integrity inflexible, his perception ready, his judgment sound, his deportment always courteous, exemplary, and pleasing, he discharged all the public duties to which he was called with distinguished reputation. After his profession of faith in Christ, his life, morally correct and seemingly without defect before, was pre-eminently that of an enlightened and devoted follower of the Lord Jesus.

“In all the various relations which he sustained, his character as a great and good man shone with peculiar luster. In the church, he was not simply a member, but a pillar. No one could command more respect, no one possessed more influence. In the great schemes of benevolence which distinguish the present age, he ever lent a helping hand, and over several beneficent institutions was called to preside. A decided, though unostentatious Christian, he was ready to do every good work, and by his counsels and efforts, the weight of his character, and the beautiful consistency of his piety, did much to promote the cause which he espoused, and to recommend the religion he professed. It may be truly said of him, that ‘he walked with God.’

“In private and social life, his character had charms of still greater endearment and loveliness. Here he loved most to move, and here his more intimate friends will love to contemplate him. Modest and unassuming, frank and generous, cordial and cheerful, he was eminently formed for friendship, and none knew him but to love and honor him. His mansion was always the abode of hospitality, his heart was always open, delighting in those varied duties which pertain to the friend, the neighbor, the relative, the father, and head of his family. In these several relations, his example was noble, beautiful, lovely indeed!

“The closing scene corresponded with the tenor of his long and useful life. It was calm, dignified, of steadfast faith, meekness, patience, and Christian hope. He died in the full possession of his mental faculties, leaving behind him a truly enviable reputation, and coming to his grave, ‘as a shock of corn fully ripe, in its season.’ ”

\* Uriah Tracy was born in 1754 and died in 1807. He was many years a leading member of Congress, and distinguished for his eloquence, learning, and wit. I have heard of him the following anecdote: Toward the latter part of Adams's administration, the latter nominated to office a connection of his family, by the name of Johnson, formerly a federalist, but recently turned democrat. This was offensive to the federalists, and Tracy, then of the Senate, being regarded as a skillful diplomat, was appointed to go and remonstrate with the President. He



history of Connecticut, had been dead for several years, but others of great eminence were still living—giving to Litchfield a remarkable prominence in the State. Among these were Tapping Reeve,\* at one time chief-justice of Connecticut, and founder of the law school, which was long the first institution of the kind in the United States; Colonel Talmadge, distinguished as a gallant officer in the Revolution, and a manly, eloquent debater in Congress; James Gould, a learned judge, an elegant scholar, and successor of Reeve in the law school; Jabez W. Huntington—law lecturer, judge, senator—and distinguished in all these eminent stations; Lyman Beecher,† an able theolo-

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accordingly went, and having put his Excellency in excellent humor, by some of his best stories, at last said—

“By the way, we have been thinking over this nomination of Johnson, and find there is a good deal of objection to him. The democrats will oppose him, because you nominated him; and some of the federalists will oppose him, because he is a democrat. We fear that if he goes to a vote, he will fail of a confirmation. As it would be unfortunate, just now, to have the administration defeated, your friends have requested me to suggest to your Excellency whether it would not be best to withdraw his name and substitute another?”

The President thrust his hands into his breeches pockets, and strode fiercely across the room: then coming up to Tracy, he said—“No, sir, no—that — Boston Junto will never be satisfied till they drive me and my family back to Braintree to dig potatoes. No, sir—I’ll not withdraw it!”

\* Judge Reeve was born in 1744, and died in 1823. His law school was founded in 1784; in 1794, he associated Judge Gould with him. In 1820, Judge Reeve left it, and Mr. Huntington became connected with it. More than eight hundred persons have here had their legal education: among these there have been fifteen United States senators—five have been cabinet members; ten governors of States; two judges of the Supreme Court; and forty judges of State courts. Judge Gould died in 1838, aged 67: Judge Huntington died in 1847, aged 59.

† Dr. Beecher was born at New Haven, in 1775, was educated at Yale



gian and eloquent preacher, and even now more widely known through his talented family, than his own genius. Litchfield Hill was in fact not only one of the most elevated features in the physical conformation of Connecticut, but one of the focal points of literature and civilization. You will readily suppose that my visits here were among the most interesting events of my early life.

In August, 1851, there was at Litchfield a gathering of distinguished natives of the county, convened to celebrate its organization, which had taken place a century before. Appropriate addresses were made by Judge Church, Dr. Bushnell, F. A. Tallmadge, D. S. Dickinson, George W. Holley, George Gould, Henry Dutton, and other persons of distinction.

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College, settled at Hampton, Long Island, 1798; in 1810, at Litchfield; in 1826, in the Hanover-street church, Boston; in 1832, became President of the Lane Theological Seminary, Cincinnati, which office he resigned in 1842, returning to Boston, where he still resides. He has published several volumes on theological subjects. He has devoted his long life, with prodigious activity and vigor, to the promotion of religion, learning, and the larger humanities of life. As a preacher he was very effective, possessing surpassing powers of statement, illustration, and argument.

His spirit and genius seem to have been imparted to his large family, of whom Edward Beecher, Miss Catherine Beecher, Mrs. Stowe, Henry Ward Beecher, and others—all celebrated for their works—are members.

At the time I was in Litchfield I heard the following anecdote of Dr. B. He was one evening going home, having in his hand a volume of Ree's *Encyclopædia*, which he had taken at the bookstore. In his way, he met a skunk, and threw the book at him, upon which the animal retorted, and with such effect that the doctor reached home in a very shocking plight. Some time after he was assailed, rather abusively, by a controversialist, and a friend advised the doctor to reply. "No," said he—"I once discharged a quarto at a skunk, and I got the worst of it. I do not wish to try it again!"

## LETTER XXXIV.

*Stephen R. Bradley—My Pursuit of the Vocation of Bookseller and Publisher—Scott's Poems—General Enthusiasm—Byron's Poems—Their Reception—The Waverley Novels—Their amazing Popularity—I publish an Edition of them—Literary Club at Hartford—J. M. Wainwright, Isaac Toucey, William L. Stone, &c.—The Round Table—Original American Works—State of Opinion as to American Literature—Publication of Trumbull's Poems—Books for Education—Rev. C. A. Goodrich—Dr. Comstock—Woodbridge's Geography.*

MY DEAR C\*\*\*\*\*

Early in the year 1818 I was married to the daughter of Stephen Rowe Bradley,\* of Westminster, Vermont. Thus established in life, I pursued the business of bookseller and publisher at Hartford for

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\* General Bradley was a native of Cheshire, Connecticut, where he was born, Oct. 20, 1754. He graduated at Yale College in 1775, and as before stated, was aid to Gen. Wooster, at the time he fell, in a skirmish with the British, near Danbury, in 1777. He removed to Vermont about the year 1780, and devoting himself to the bar, acquired an extensive practice. Having popular manners, and a keen insight into society, he became a prominent political leader, and exercised a large influence in laying the foundations of the State of Vermont, then the Texas of this country—Ethan Allen, Ira Allen, Seth Warner, and Thomas Chittenden—all from Connecticut—being the Austins and Houstons of its early history. At the period to which I refer it was rising from the chaos of the Revolutionary war, and the still more disorganizing contests with colonial claimants for sovereignty over her territories. In 1791, that State having come into the Union, Gen. Bradley was chosen one of its first senators. With an interval of six years—from 1795 to 1801—he continued in the Senate till 1818, a period of sixteen years. He was a member of the democratic party, and called, "*by virtue of powers vested in him,*" the caucus which nominated Madison, and resulted in his election to the presidency. He was distinguished for political sagacity, a ready wit, boundless stores of anecdote, a large acquaintance with mankind, and an extensive range of historical knowledge. His conversation was exceedingly attractive, being always illustrated by pertinent anecdotes and apt historical references. His devel-

four years. My vocation gave me the command of books, but I was able to read but little, my eyes continuing to be so weak that I could hardly do justice to my affairs. By snatches, however, I dipped into a good many books, and acquired a considerable knowledge of authors and their works.

During the period in which Scott had been enchanting the world with his poetry—that is, from 1805 to 1815—I had shared in the general intoxication. The *Lady of the Lake* delighted me beyond expression, and even now, it seems to me the most pleasing and perfect of metrical romances. These productions seized powerfully upon the popular mind, partly on account of the romance of their revelations, and partly also because of the pellucidity of the style and the easy flow of the versification. Everybody could read and comprehend them. One of my younger sisters committed the whole of the *Lady of the Lake* to memory, and was accustomed of an evening to sit at her sewing, while she recited it to an admiring circle of listeners. All young poets were inoculated with the octa-syllabic verse, and news-

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opments of the interior machinery of parties, during the times of Washington, Jefferson, and Madison; his portraits of the political leaders of these interesting eras in our history—all freely communicated at a period when he had retired from the active arena of politics, and now looked back upon them with the feelings of a philosopher—were in the highest degree interesting and instructive. He received the degree of LL.D., and having removed to Walpole, in New Hampshire, a few years before, died Dec. 16, 1830, aged 76. His son, W. C. Bradley—still living, at the age of 74—has also been a distinguished lawyer and member of Congress.

papers, magazines, and even volumes, teemed with imitations and variations inspired by the "Wizard Harp of the North." Not only did Scott\* himself continue to pour out volume after volume, but others produced set

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\* Scott experienced the fate of most eminent writers who have acquired a certain mannerism, recognized by the community at large—that is, he was laughed at by burlesques of his works. George Colman, the Younger, though not *very* young, travestied the *Lady of the Lake* under the title of the *Lady of the Wreck*—the latter of about the same dimensions as the former. It is an Irish story, full of droll extravagance and laughable imitations of the original, at which they are aimed.

In 1812, appeared the "Rejected Addresses" of James and Horace Smith, and in these the principal poets of the day were imitated, and their peculiarities parodied. They may, in fact, be considered as masterly criticisms of the several authors, in which their weak points are strongly suggested to the reader. The laughable imitations of the "Lake Poets"—Wordsworth, Southey, and Coleridge—probably had as much effect in curing them of their affectations, as the scoffing ridicule of the Edinburgh Review. Even Byron, who actually gained the prize offered by the manager of Drury Lane Theater, on the occasion of its opening in the new building, received a staggering blow from the imitation of Childe Harold, which was so close in manner as to seem as if extracted from that poem, while the spirit of the composition is strongly and effectively ridiculed. The following are two characteristic stanzas :

"Sated with home, with wife and children tired,  
The restless soul is driven abroad to roam—  
Sated abroad, all seen, yet naught admired—  
The restless soul is driven to ramble home.  
Sated with both, beneath new Drury's dome,  
The fiend Ennui a while consents to pine—  
There growls and curses like a deadly Gnome,  
Scorning to view fantastic Columbine,  
Viewing with scorn the nonsense of the Nine!

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"For what is Hamlet, but a hare in March?  
And what is Brutus, but a croaking owl?  
And what is Rolla? Cupid steep'd in starch,  
Orlando's helmet in Augustine's cowl!  
Shakspeare—how true thine adage, 'fair is foul'—  
To him whose soul is with fruition fraught,  
The song of Braham is an Irish howl—  
Thinking it but an idle waste of thought,  
And naught is every thing and every thing is naught!"

poems, in his style, some of them so close in their imitation, as to be supposed the works of Scott himself, trying the effect of a disguise. At last, however, the market was overstocked, and the general appetite began to pall with a surfeit, when one of those sudden changes took place in the public taste, which resemble the convulsions of nature—as a whirlwind or a tempest in the tropics—by which a monsoon, having blown steadily from one point in the compass, for six months, is made to turn about and blow as steadily in the opposite direction.

It was just at the point in which the octa-syllabic plethora began to revolt the public taste, that Byron produced his first canto of *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*. In London, the effect was sudden, and the youthful poet who went to bed a common man, woke up in the morning and found himself famous. This

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It is a point of the highest interest in my recollections, that during the period in which Scott and Byron were rising into notice, and afterward, in the full tide of success, were thrilling the whole reading world with their masterly productions, that the *Edinburgh Review*, under the leadership of Jeffrey, was at its zenith. His criticisms were undoubtedly the most brilliant and profound that had appeared at that period; nor has any thing superior to them been written since. About the same time Wordsworth and his friends, Southey and Coleridge, attempted to make the world believe that bathos is pathos, weakness strength, and silliness sublimity. On this experiment they wasted a large amount of genius. While the *Edinburgh Review* found a noble scope for its highest efforts in illustrating the beauties of the *Waverley* novels, and setting forth as well the faults as the sublimities of Byron, it also gave full exercise to its incomparable ridicule and raillery, in noticing the harlequinisms of the Lake triumvirate. At this period, a new number of "the *Edinburgh*" created as much sensation as a new instalment of *Macaulay's* history, at the present day.

ready appreciation there, arose in a great degree from the fact that the author was a man of fashion and a lord. In this country, these adventitious attributes were less readily felt, and therefore the reception of the new poem was more hesitating and distrustful. For some time, only a few persons seemed to comprehend it, and many who read it, scarcely knew whether to be delighted or shocked. As it gradually made its way in the public mind, it was against a strong current both of taste and principle.

The public eye and ear—imbued with the genius of Scott—had become adjusted to his sensuous painting of external objects, set in rhymes resonant as those of the nursery books. His poems were, in fact, lyrical romances, with something of epic dignity of thought and incident, presented in all the simplicity of ballad versification. A person with tastes and habits formed upon the reading of these productions, opening upon Childe Harold's Pilgrimage, was likely to feel himself—amid the long-drawn stanzas and the deep, mystic meditations—in somewhat of a labyrinth. Scott's poems were, moreover, elevating in their moral tone, and indeed the popular literature of the day—having generally purified itself from the poisons infused into it by the spirit of the French Revolution—was alike conservative in manners and morals. Campbell's Pleasures of Hope and Rogers' Pleasures of Memory, were favorite poems from 1800 to 1815; and during the same period,



Thaddeus of Warsaw, the Scottish Chiefs, the Pastor's Fireside, by Jane Porter; Sandford and Merton, by Day; Belinda, Leonora, Patronage, by Miss Edgeworth; and Cœlebs in Search of a Wife, by Hannah More—were types of the popular taste in tales and romances. It was therefore a fearful plunge from this elevated moral tone in literature, into the daring if not blasphemous skepticisms of the new poet.

The power of his productions, however, could not be resisted: he had, in fact—in delineating his own moody and morbid emotions—seemed to open a new mine of poetry in the soul; at least, he was the first to disclose it to the popular mind. By degrees, the public eye—admitted to these gloomy, cavernous regions of thought—became adjusted to their dim and dusky atmosphere, and saw, or seemed to see, a majestic spirit beckoning them deeper and deeper into its labyrinths. Thus, what was at first revolting, came at last to be a fascination. Having yielded to the enchanter, the young and the old, the grave and the gay, gave themselves up to the sorceries of the poet-wizard. The struggle over, the new-born love was ardent and profound, in proportion as it had dallied or resisted at the beginning. The very magnitude of the change—in passing from Scott's romantic ballads to Byron's metaphysical trances—when at last it was sanctioned by fashion, seemed to confirm and sanctify the revolution. Thus in about



five or six years after the appearance of the first canto of *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*—the others having speedily followed—the whole poetic world had become Byronic. Aspiring young rhymers now affected the Spenserian stanza, misanthropy, and skepticism. As Byron advanced in his career of profligacy, and reflected his shameless debaucheries in *Don Juan*, *Beppo*, and other similar effusions, the public—seduced, bewildered, enchanted—still followed him, and condescended to bring down their morals and their manners to his degraded and degrading standard.

The secret of the power thus exercised lay in various elements. In England, the aristocratic rank of Byron added greatly to his influence over the public mind, and this was at last reflected in America. With little real feeling of nature, he had, however, an imagination of flame, and an amazing gift of poetic expression. The great fascination, however—that which creates an agonizing interest in his principal poems—is the constant idea presented to the reader that, under the disguise of his fictitious heroes, he is unconsciously depicting his own sad, despairing emotions. We always feel—whether in perusing *Childe Harold*, or *Manfred*, or *Cain*, or any of his more elaborate works—as if we were listening to the moans of Prometheus struggling with the vultures, or of Ixion toiling at his wheel. We could not, if we would, refuse our pity for such suffering, even in a demon; how deep, then, must be our sympathy,

when this is spoken to us in the thrilling tones of humanity, using as its vehicle all the music and melody of the highest lyrical art!

In vain, therefore, was it that the moralist resisted the diffusion of Byron's poems over the country. The pulpit opened its thunders against them—teachers warned their pupils, parents their children. I remember, even as late as 1820, that some booksellers refused to sell them, regarding them as infidel publications. About this time a publisher of Hartford, on this ground, declined being concerned in stereotyping an edition of them. It was all in vain. Byron could no more be kept at bay, than the cholera. His works have had their march over the world, and their victims have been probably not less numerous than those of that scourge of the nations. Byron may be, in fact, considered as having opened the gates to that tide of infidelity and licentiousness which sometimes came out boldly, as in the poems of Shelly, and more disguisedly in various other works, which converted Paul Clifford and Dick Turpin into popular heroes. He lowered the standard of public taste, and prepared a portion of the people of England and America to receive with favor the blunt sensualities of Paul de Kock, and the subtle infiltrations of deism by Madame George Sand. Happily, society has in its bosom the elements of conservatism, and at the present day the flood of license has subsided, or is subsiding. Byron is still read, but his immoralities, his atheism, have lost their relish, and

are now deemed offenses and blemishes, and at the same time the public taste is directing itself in favor of a purer and more exalted moral tone in every species of literature. Longfellow, Bryant, and Tennyson are the exponents of the public taste in poetry, and Hawthorne, Dickens, Thackeray, in romance. All the varied forms of light reading are taking a corresponding tone of respect for morals and religion.

Scott speedily appreciated the eclipse to which his poetical career was doomed by the rising genius of Byron. He now turned his attention to prose fiction, and in July, 1814, completed and published *Waverley*, which had been begun some eight or ten years before. It produced no sudden emotion in the literary world. It was considered a clever performance—nothing more. I recollect to have heard it criticised by some veteran novel-readers of that day, because its leading character, *Waverley*, was only a respectable, commonplace person, and not a perfect hero, according to the old standards of romance. *Guy Mannering* came out the next year, and was received with a certain degree of eagerness. The *Antiquary*, *Black Dwarf*, *Old Mortality*, *Rob Roy*, and the *Heart of Mid-Lothian*, followed in quick succession. I suspect that never, in any age, have the productions of any author created in the world so wide and deep an enthusiasm. This emotion reached its height upon the appearance of *Ivanhoe* in 1819, which, I think, proved the most popular of these marvelous productions.

At this period, although there was a good deal of mystery as to their authorship, the public generally referred them to Scott.\* He was called the "Great Unknown"—a title which served to create even an adventitious interest in his career. The appearance of a new tale from his pen, caused a greater sensation in the United States than did some of the battles of Napoleon, which decided the fate of thrones and empires. Everybody read these works; everybody—the refined and the simple—shared in the delightful trances which seemed to transport them to remote ages and distant climes, and made them live and breathe in the presence of the stern Covenanters of Scotland, the gallant bowmen of Sherwood Forest, or even the Crusaders in Palestine, where Cœur de Lion and Saladin were seen struggling for the mastery! I can testify to my own share in this intoxication. I was not able, on account of my eyes, to read these works myself, but I found friends to read

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\* It is a fact worthy of being noted, that while the evidence that Scott was the author of the Waverley Novels was clear and conclusive, various writers asserted the contrary. Some contended that they were written by Sir Walter's brother, Thomas, in Canada; some, that they were the productions of a certain—or rather an *uncertain*—Dr. Greenfield, &c. The subject was discussed with great vehemence, and something like partisan bitterness. It was proved to demonstration, over and over again, by some of these wisacres, from internal, external, moral, religious, and political evidence, that Sir Walter Scott could not be the author. The foundation of all this was that envy, inherent in some minds, which is offended by success. Persons of this class invented, and at last believed, the absurdities which they propagated. The fact is instructive, for it teaches us the danger of following the lead of littleness and malignity. Candor is a safer guide than envy or malice.

them to me. To one good old maid—Heaven bless her!—I was indebted for the perusal of no less than seven of these tales.

Of course, there were many editions of these works in the United States, and among others, I published an edition, I think in eight volumes, octavo—including those which had appeared at that time. About this period—that is, in 1819—I was one of a literary club, of which J. M. Wainwright,\* Isaac Toucey, William L. Stone, Jonathan Law, S. H. Huntington, and others, were members. The first meeting was at my house, and I composed a poem for the occasion,

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\* Dr. Wainwright was born at Liverpool, in 1792, of parents who were citizens of the United States, but who at that date were on a visit to England. He came to this country at the age of 11, was educated at Cambridge, and was instituted rector of Christ Church at Hartford, in 1815. He came to New York about 1820, and after filling various important stations, was in 1852 elected provisional bishop of the diocese of New York. He was an accomplished scholar and gentleman, and an earnest and successful laborer in the various fields to which his life was devoted.

Mr. Toucey studied law at Newtown, and came to Hartford about 1812, and has since resided there. He is an eminent lawyer, and has filled the offices of governor and senator of the United States. The latter place he still holds.

William L. Stone, born at Esopus, New York, 1792, was first a printer, and afterward became distinguished as an editor—first in conducting a political paper at Albany, and then at Hudson. When Theodore Dwight, who had founded the Connecticut Mirror, left for Albany, in 1816, Mr. Stone succeeded him. In 1821, he succeeded to the editorship of the Commercial Advertiser, at New York, which place he filled till his death, in 1844. He published various works, among which were the Life of Brant, Memoir of Red Jacket, Letters on Masonry and Antimasonry, &c. He wrote with great rapidity and fluency, and had a remarkable talent in collecting materials and making compilations. In personal character he was exceedingly amiable, giving his warm sympathy to all things charitable and religious.

Jonathan Law was the postmaster of Hartford; he was a good scholar,

entitled "A Vision"—afterward published, with other poems, in 1836. I also published three or four numbers of a small work entitled the "Round Table," the articles of which were written by different members of the club.

About this time I began to think of trying to bring out original American works. It must be remembered that I am speaking of a period prior to 1820. At that date, Bryant, Irving, and Cooper—the founders of our modern literature—a trinity of genius in poetry, essay, and romance—had but just commenced their literary career. Neither of them had acquired a positive reputation. Halleck, Percival, Brainard, Longfellow, Willis, were at school—at least, all were unknown. The general impression was that we had not, and could not have, a literature. It was the precise point at which Sidney Smith had uttered that bitter taunt in the *Edinburgh Review*—"Who reads an American book?" It proved to be that "darkest hour just before the dawn." The successful booksellers of the country—Carey, Small, Thomas, Warner, of Philadelphia; Campbell, Duyckinck, Reed, Kirk & Mercein, Whiting & Watson, of New York; Beers & Howe, of New Haven; O. D.

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a man of refined feelings, with a sensitive, shrinking delicacy of manners in the intercourse of life.

Mr. Huntington has been judge of the county court, and has filled other responsible offices. He is now clerk of the Court of Claims, at Washington, though he resides at Hartford.—Such were some of the members of our little club.



Cooke, of Hartford; West & Richardson, Cummings & Hilliard, R. P. & C. Williams, S. T. Armstrong, of Boston—were for the most part the mere reproducers and sellers of English books. It was positively injurious to the commercial credit of a bookseller to undertake American works, unless they might be Morse's Geographies, classical books, school-books, devotional books, or other utilitarian works.

Nevertheless, about this time I published an edition of Trumbull's poems, in two volumes, octavo, and paid him a thousand dollars, and a hundred copies of the work, for the copyright. I was seriously counseled against this by several booksellers—and, in fact, Trumbull had sought a publisher, in vain, for several years previous. There was an association of designers and engravers at Hartford, called the "Graphic Company,"\* and as I desired to patronize the liberal arts there, I employed them to execute the embellishments. For so considerable an enterprise, I took the precaution to get a subscription, in which I was tolerably successful. The work was at last produced, but it did not come up to the public expectation, or the patriotic zeal had cooled, and more than half the subscribers declined taking the work.

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\* The designer of the establishment was Elkanah Tisdale, a fat, facetious gentleman—a miniature painter by profession, but a man of some literary taste, and admirable humor in anecdote. He illustrated, with great cleverness, the handsome edition of the *Echo*, published by Isaac Riley—brother-in-law of Dwight and Alsop, two of the principal authors—though it professes to be from the Porcupine Press, and by Pasquin Petronius.



I did not press it, but putting a good face upon the affair, I let it pass, and—while the public supposed I had made money by my enterprise, and even the author looked askance at me in the jealous apprehension that I had made too good a bargain out of him—I quietly pocketed a loss of about a thousand dollars. This was my first serious adventure in patronizing American literature.

About the same period I turned my attention to books for education and books for children, being strongly impressed with the idea that there was here a large field for improvement. I wrote, myself, a small arithmetic, and half a dozen toy-books, and published them, though I have never before confessed their authorship. I also employed several persons to write school histories, and educational manuals of chemistry, natural philosophy, &c., upon plans which I prescribed—all of which I published; but none of these were very successful at that time. Some of them, passing into other hands, are now among the most popular and profitable school-books in the country.\*

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\* Among these was *A History of the United States of America*, by Rev. C. A. Goodrich: this was the first of the popular school histories of the United States, now in circulation—and, in fact, the first of my brother's numerous publications. Previous to this time, the history of the United States was not one of our school studies. Other works of a similar kind, after this example, soon followed, but this work has continued to be one of the most popular. Several hundred thousand copies of it have been sold.

Another was an educational treatise on *Natural Philosophy*, by J. L. Comstock, which is now a popular and standard work in the schools, and has been republished in England. Dr. Comstock also wrote, upon plans which I indicated, an educational work on Chemistry, another or

William C. Woodbridge, one of the teachers of the Deaf and Dumb Asylum, at this time projected a school geography, in which I assisted him—mostly in preparing the details of the work for the press, and in the mechanical department. When an edition of it was finally ready—after long and anxious labor, both on his part and mine—the state of my health compelled me to relinquish it. This work acquired great popularity, and became the starting-point of a new era in school geographies, both in this country and in England.

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Mineralogy, &c., which I published. Thus this excellent and useful author began that series of treatises, designed to popularize science, which has placed his name among the eminent benefactors of education in this country. I am happy to say, that he is still living at Hartford, in the enjoyment of the respect and friendship which his amiable character and useful life naturally inspire—and, I may add, in the enjoyment also of that independence which is but a just compensation of well-directed industry and talent.

Mr. Woodbridge was born in 1795, graduated at Yale in 1811, and, having studied theology, became one of the teachers of the deaf and dumb, at Hartford. He was a man of the greatest amenity of manner and purity of life; he showed also a complete devotion to what he deemed his duty, viewed through a religious light. He gave his attention to education, and may be considered as one of the pioneers in the great improvements lately made in the art of instruction. He traveled in Europe, visiting the most celebrated educational establishments, and holding intercourse with the most enlightened friends of educational progress and improvement. The result of his researches and reflections he gave to the public in numerous valuable and profound treatises. He was a little too much of a perfectionist to be immediately practical, and hence his books—two geographical treatises—were somewhat beyond the age in which he lived; but still they exercised a powerful influence in suggesting valuable ideas to others. His first geography I took to England in 1823, and got it published there, for his benefit. It still continues to be published in London. Mr. Woodbridge was a man of feeble health, yet struggled manfully till 1845, when he expired, at Boston—loved and admired by all who knew him.

## LETTER XXXV.

*Sketches of the "Hartford Wits"—Dr. Hopkins—Trumbull, author of McFingal—David Humphries—Dr. Strong—Theodore Dwight—Thomas H. Galkaudet—Daniel Wadsworth—Dr. Cogswell—Mrs. Sigourney.*

MY DEAR C\*\*\*\*\*

In order to complete the panorama of my life at Hartford, I must give you a brief sketch of some of the persons whom I knew there, and who had become conspicuous by their words or works. I have already said that Hopkins,\* who in point of genius stood at the head of the noted literary fraternity of "Hartford Wits," was not living when I went to reside at that place. Trumbull, the author of *McFingal*, was still living, and I knew him well. He was at that time an old man, and—always small of stature—was now bent, emaciated, and tottering with a cane. His features were finely cut, and he must have been

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\* Dr. Lemuel Hopkins was born at Waterbury, 1750 : he practiced physic at Litchfield, and afterward at Hartford, where he died in 1801. He left a strong impression upon the public mind, as well by the eccentricity of his personal appearance and habits, as by his learning and genius. He was often described to me as long and lank, walking with spreading arms and straddling legs. His nose was long, lean, and flexible ; his eyes protruding, and his whole expression a strange mixture of solemnity and drollery. He was of a social disposition, and often in talking at a neighbor's house, would forget his business engagements. He was intimate with Theodore Dwight, and his daughter has told me that she recollects his coming to their house, and being very much fatigued, he laid himself down on the floor, and put a log of wood under his head for a pillow. Here he began to dictate poetry, which her father wrote down, being very likely one of those poems which has placed his name among the most vigorous of our satirists.

handsome in his younger days. His eye was keen and bright, his nose slightly aquiline, his mouth arching downward at the corners, expressive of sarcastic humor. There was something about him that at once bespoke the man of letters, the poet, and the satirist.\*

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\* John Trumbull—the poet—belonged to one of those remarkable families in Connecticut which, through several generations, have possessed talents that carried them to the highest stations in society. Jonathan Trumbull, of Lebanon, born in 1710, was elected governor in 1769, and continued to be annually elected till 1783, when he resigned, having been thirty years, without interruption, in public employment. His services, rendered to the country during the war, were regarded as almost next those of Washington. It is said that the name given to our country of “Brother Jonathan,” came from him, in an allusion to his co-operation with Washington in the Revolution. He died in 1785. His son Jonathan, born at Lebanon, 1740, was Washington’s secretary and aid, member of Congress in 1789, speaker of the House in 1791, in 1794 senator, and in 1798, governor of the State. He died in 1809. Joseph Trumbull, nephew of the preceding, and still living, has filled various offices, and been senator of the United States and governor of the State. Benjamin Trumbull, the distinguished historian—born in 1735 and died in 1820—was nephew of the first Gov. Trumbull. Col. John Trumbull, brother of the second governor of that name and aid to Washington, was an eminent painter and elegant gentleman, and died in 1843, aged 87. A collection of his paintings, valuable as historical and biographical mementoes, belongs to Yale College.

John Trumbull, the poet, son of the Rev. John T. of Watertown, a connection of this family, was born 1750. At seven he was admitted at college, but did not enter upon his studies there till thirteen. I have heard him say that when he went to enter at Yale, he rode on horseback behind his father, and wore his mother’s cloak and hood. He studied law, mingling the composition of poetry with legal pursuits. Having been in the law office of John Adams, at Boston, he settled as a lawyer at Hartford in 1781, and became distinguished in his profession. He wrote several poems, the most noted of which was *McFingal*, an imitation of *Hudibras*, and in some passages not inferior to the best portions of that famous production. Trumbull was, no doubt, the most conspicuous literary character of his day, in this country. I published a revised edition of his works in 1820, as elsewhere stated. His society was much sought, and he was the nucleus of a band of brilliant geniuses, including Dwight, Hopkins, Alsop, Humphries, &c.

The latter I often saw at Hartford, usually on visits to Trumbull. He

Dr. Strong was the minister of the Middle Brick Church—the principal Congregational church in the city. He was now near threescore and ten—large, infirm, and shuffling along as if afflicted with gout in the feet. His life and character had been marked with eccentricities—with worldliness, wit, and social aptitudes. Nevertheless, he was an eloquent and devout preacher: it was said of him that when in the pulpit, it seemed that he ought never to leave it, and when out of it, that he ought never to go into it. All his levity, however, had passed when I knew him. He was indeed fast approaching that bourne whence no traveler returns. With all his early

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was then old, and living in his native town of Derby, where he had established a woolen manufactory. He had been one of the handsomest men of his time, and was now large, portly, powdered, with a blue coat and bright buttons, a yellow waistcoat, drab breeches, and white-top boots. His complexion was florid, showing a little more appreciation of Sherry than was orthodox in Connecticut—a taste he brought with his wife and her fortune from Lisbon, or Madrid, in both which places he had been ambassador. He was in truth a splendid mixture of the old Continental soldier, and the powdered and pomatumed diplomat. Though past sixty, he still affected poetry, and on one occasion—perhaps about 1810—came in his coach-and-four, to get Trumbull to aid him in finishing his *Fable of the Monkey*, who, imitating his master in shaving, cut his own throat. He had nearly completed it, but wished a pointed, epigrammatic termination. Trumbull took it and read to the end, as it was written, and then added, without stopping—

“Drew razor swift as he could pull it,  
And cut, from ear to ear, his gullet!”

This completed the fable, and it so stands to this day. This anecdote was told me by Trumbull himself, and I gave it to Kettell, who inserted it in the notice of the poet, in his “*Specimens of American Poetry*.” Humphries died in 1818; Trumbull in 1841, having been a judge of the Superior Court from 1801 till 1819, when he was disqualified by age, under a law of the State.

faults, he had a very strong hold of the affections and confidence of his people. His face was remarkably expressive, his eye keen, his lips firm, his nose arched, and his long, thick, gray hair turned back and rolled in waves upon his shoulders. I am not sure that his reputation as a man of wit and worldly taste, now that these were cast aside, did not deepen the impression made by his preaching at this period. I am certain that I have never heard discourses more impressive, more calculated to subdue the pride of the heart, and turn it to religious submission, than these. He was considered a man of remarkable sagacity, especially in penetrating the motives of mankind, and he was at the same time esteemed by his clerical brethren as a very able divine. He published two volumes of sermons, but they furnish little evidence of the genius which was imputed to him. His reputation is now merely traditional, but it is impossible not to perceive that, with such eccentricities, he must have been a man of remarkable qualities, inasmuch as he gathered into his congregation the first minds in the city, and left a name which still seems a bond of union and strength to the church over which he presided.\*

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\* Nathan Strong, D.D., was born at Coventry, 1748, and graduated at Yale: during the Revolution, he was a chaplain in the army. After he was settled as a minister, he became a partner in the firm of Strong & Smith, and engaged in the manufacture of gin. As was fit and proper, one of his deacons, good old Mr. Corning, was a grocer, and sold New England rum. As this article was frequently wanted after the store was shut, he kept a barrel on tap at his house, so that the people need



Theodore Dwight, a younger brother of Dr. Dwight, was born at Northampton, in 1764. His early life was spent upon the farm, and at that period when the wolf, wild-cat, and Indian were occasionally seen in the forest—furnishing him with ample materials for interesting descriptions of adventure in after

not suffer for the want of this staff of life! The firm of Strong & Smith failed, and the minister shut himself up in his house to avoid the sheriff, but as no writ could be served on Sundays, he then went forth and preached to his congregation. All this took place toward the close of the last century. There was nothing in it disgraceful, then. Let those who deny that society has made progress in its standard of propriety, compare this with the universal tone of public sentiment now.

Of the numerous anecdotes of Dr. Strong, I give you one or two specimens. The first of these is connected with the Missionary Society of Connecticut, of which he was a principal founder. The Rev. Mr. Bacon—father of the present celebrated Dr. Leonard Bacon, of New Haven—had been employed as a missionary to that part of Ohio called the Western Reserve. Some deeply interesting letters, detailing his operations, had been received, and on the Sabbath, after the service, Dr. Strong invited Theodore Dwight into the pulpit, to read them. This he performed, and the letters made a deep impression upon the audience. One old man, by the name of Z... P...., who was not only hard of hearing, but hard of head and heart, actually wept. As Mr. Dwight was about to descend, the doctor whispered to him—"You have done in thirty minutes what I have not been able to accomplish in thirty years: you have made old Z... P.... cry!"

Dr. S. had issued a prospectus for his sermons, when one day he met Trumbull the poet. "When are your sermons to be out?" said the latter. "I cannot exactly tell," said the doctor. "I am waiting to find a text to suit a man who never comes to church, except when he has a child to be baptized"—a palpable allusion to Trumbull's neglect of the sanctuary about those days.

Dr. Mason, of New York, once called on Dr. Strong, and as he was about to depart, he stumbled, and almost fell, in consequence of a defect in one of the door-steps. "Why don't you mend your ways?" said he, somewhat peevishly. "I was waiting for a Mason," was the ready reply.

One of Dr. S.'s deacons came to him with a difficulty. "Pray, doctor," said he, "tell me how it happens: all my hens hatch on Sunday." "The reason is," said the doctor, "that you set them on Sunday!"



time. When nearly twenty, he injured his wrist, and being disqualified for the labors of a farmer, he turned his attention to study, and finally selected the profession of the law. He established himself at Hartford,\* and rose to eminence in his profession. He had, however, a strong bias toward literature, and

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\* When I went to reside at Hartford, Mr. Dwight was living next door to my uncle, and was on intimate terms with him. He was a tall, handsome man, with an exceedingly black, flashing eye, and a lip that curled easily in laughter or satire. He had an infinite fund of anecdote, great learning, an abundant acquaintance with literature, and lively powers of description. He wrote with facility, and dashed off verses almost by improvisation.

In early life, he had written sentimental poetry, specimens of which may be found in "American Poems," published at Litchfield, in 1793. The lines, "Alfred to Philena," are his—Philena being Mrs. Morton. They sound strongly Della Cruscan—at this day—for the productions of Theodore Dwight. As an editor, he was chiefly devoted to politics, pursuing democracy with the unsparing vigilance of a falcon in chase of its prey. Some of his pasquinades became very popular, and greatly irritated the opposite party. His lines in ridicule of a Jeffersonian festival at New Haven, March, 1803—beginning as follows, and consisting of some dozen similar stanzas—were said and sung all over the country.

Ye tribes of Faction, join—  
 Your daughters and your wives:  
 Moll Cary's come to dine,  
 And dance with Deacon Ives.  
 Ye ragged throng  
 Of democrats,  
 As thick as rats,  
 Come join the song.  
 Old Deacon Bishop stands,  
 With well-befrizzled wig,  
 File-leader of the band,  
 To open with a jig—  
 With parrot-toe  
 The poor old man  
 Tries all he can  
 To make it go, &c.

When the Non-intercourse act—the last of the so-called "*Restrictive Measures*," and which by way of ridicule had been nick-named the

wrote verses and political essays. Such was the reputation he soon acquired, that he was selected by Wolcott, Hamilton, and others, to preside over the Evening Post, established in 1801. This offer was declined, and William Coleman filled the place. Mr. Dwight was elected a member of the State Coun-

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"*Terrapin System*," was repealed—Dwight wrote the following. It pretends to be a lyrical lament sung by the democrats at Washington, with whom this system had been a great favorite.

#### DIRGICAL HYMN.

Mourn ! sons of democratic woe !  
 In sadness bow the head :  
 Bend every back with sorrow low—  
 Poor TERRAPIN is dead.  
 And see his dying bed, around  
 His weeping friends appear :  
 Low droops his grandsire to the ground ;  
 His father drops a tear.  
 Old Clopton begs the twentieth god,  
 The victim's life to spare :  
 Calhoun and Johnson kiss the rod,  
 And Troup and Johnson swear.  
 Good old Long Tom stands sniveling by  
 His dying eyes to close ;  
 While Jemmy heaves a bitter sigh,  
 And wipes his mournful nose.  
 Let sharks exult with savage joy,  
 The wallowing porpoise spout :  
 No more his fangs their peace annoy,  
 Nor dread their ribs his snout.  
 Mud-turtles, paddle at your ease  
 In every pond and pool ;  
 Ye tadpoles, settle on your lees,  
 And in the slime-bed cool.  
 Ye British weavers, shout and sing ;  
 Ye tinkers, join the chorus ;  
 Cobblers and tailors, make a ring,  
 And dance a jig before us !  
 Tell old King George the glorious tale :  
 Amid his dire offences,  
 Perhaps 'twill light his visage pale,  
 And bring him to his senses.

cil, and in 1806, a member of Congress. Soon after he established the Connecticut Mirror, and from that time followed the career of an editor. He was secretary of the Hartford Convention in 1814. In 1815, he removed to Albany, and conducted the Albany Daily Advertiser: in 1817, he

The time will shortly come, when we  
 Like Terrapin must wander;  
 And our poor eyes will nothing see  
 But death's cold Gerrymander!

The "Gerrymander" here alluded to, originated in a division of Massachusetts, by the democrats, in the time of Governor Gerry, into Congressional Districts, so as to give that party the ascendancy. It was a violent disregard of geographical and political propriety, and the federalists retaliated by having a huge monster—with tail and claws, resembling, in outline, the state of Massachusetts, as thus distorted—engraved and circulated, with an exceedingly piquant natural history of the animal. It took such effect that for a long time it gave a new word to the American political vocabulary. It is said by Buckingham, that Gilbert Stuart, the artist, suggested this clever caricature.

The following will serve as a specimen of Mr. Dwight's New-Year's Carrier's verses, which appeared annually, and acquired great popularity. This extract is from the Connecticut Mirror, January 6, 1813.

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Survey our desolated shores,  
 Our grass-grown wharves and empty stores—  
 Our arts and industry depress'd,  
 The wealthy cramp'd, the poor distress'd:  
 Our cities wrapp'd in deepest gloom,  
 Our commerce buried in the tomb.  
 No hum of business meets the ear,  
 No songs of joy the bosom cheer;  
 The sailor hears the whistling blasts  
 Murmur through sullen groves of masts—  
 The billows dash, the useless sail  
 Flap mournful to the rising gale—  
 Then turns and views the dismal shed  
 Where his young offspring cry for bread,  
 And as the nightly breezes blow,  
 Curses the authors of his woe!  
 Naught but exterminating war  
 Could all this nation's blessings mar—  
 Naught but an arm of Vandal power

established the *Daily Advertiser* in New York, of which he was the chief editor till 1836, when he removed to Hartford. He afterward returned to New York, where he died, in 1846.

Among the Hartford notables was Daniel Wadsworth, son of Col. Jeremiah Wadsworth, who had

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The harvest of its hopes devour.  
 Where is that virtuous patriot band,  
 The pride, the bulwark of our land,  
 Form'd to uphold the nation's sway—  
 Pinckney, and Strong, and King, and Jay—  
 Whose counsels might our country shield,  
 And guide our armies in the field?  
 By party zeal and passions base,  
 Exiled from power, and driven from place!  
 Who fill the void? What names succeed?  
 Read the bright list—exult and read!  
 Alston and Johnson, Fisk, Desha,  
 Porter and Piper, Pond and Rhea,  
 Grundy, and Hufty, and Lefevre,  
 Sammons and Stow, and Shaw, and Seaver,  
 Newton, McCoy, McKim, McKee,  
 Smilie, and Troup, and Widgery!—  
 And shall our nation's courage sink,  
 E'en on perdition's awful brink,  
 When such a constellated train  
 Her highest interests sustain?

I have already alluded to the “Hartford wits,” of whom Mr. Dwight was one. Their reputation was chiefly founded upon a series of articles which appeared in various papers, and were collected and published in 1807, under the title of the *Echo*—including other pieces. They consisted of satires, mostly in the form of parodies and burlesques—with occasional passages of a more serious character. They attracted great attention at the time, and had a wholesome effect in curing the public of a taste for ridiculous bombast, which then prevailed. The principal writers were Mr. Dwight, his brother-in-law Richard Alsop, of Middletown, and Dr. Hopkins, of Hartford. Mr. Theodore Dwight, now of New York, the son of the author I am noticing, has shown me a volume in which the lines contributed by each of these persons are marked, in the handwriting of his father. This suggests the manner in which the whole was written—one composing a few stanzas, then another taking the pen, and then another. The characteristics of each of these several writers are clearly indicated, in compositions having a general aspect of homogeneity.

been a distinguished member of Congress. He had traveled in Europe, and was not only a man of large wealth, but he had a taste for literature and art. His wife was daughter of the second Governor Trumbull, and a very excellent example of the refined and dignified lady of the olden time. She had been at Phil-

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I am indebted to Mr. Dwight for the following, which is copied from a memorandum in his father's handwriting, in relation to the Echo :

"In the year 1829 a work was published in Boston, called 'Specimens of American Poetry,' &c., by S. Kettell. In a biographical sketch of Richard Alsop, a minute and circumstantial account is given by Mr. Kettell, and which has been frequently referred to as a correct narrative of that publication. It seems no more than an act of justice to individuals, that a true history of it should be published.

"The first number of the Echo appeared in the American Mercury, at Hartford, in August, 1791. It was written at Middletown, by Richard Alsop and Theodore Dwight. The authors, at the time of writing it, had no expectation of its being published; their sole object was to amuse themselves, and a few of their personal friends. The general account of its origin is given in the preface of the volume in which the numbers were afterward collected, and published in New York. A few lines in the course of it were written by three of their literary friends, viz.: Dr. M. F. Coggeswell, Elihu H. Smith, and Lemuel Hopkins. Dr. Hopkins wrote more than these two others; a considerable part of ten numbers were by him. With these exceptions, the entire work was the production of Messrs. Alsop and Dwight. Judge Trumbull never wrote a line of it. Mr. Kettell's account is incorrect in almost every essential particular.

"The 'Political Green-House' was written by Alsop, Hopkins, and Dwight, in unequal proportions."

I think it may be remarked that, in these compositions, Dwight shows the most brilliant fancy and playful wit, Alsop the broadest humor, and Hopkins the most original and crushing satire. French Jacobinism, with all its brood of infidelity, radicalism, and licentiousness, is the especial object of attack throughout, and is justly and unsparingly ridiculed.

Though Mr. Dwight is perhaps chiefly known as the author of satirical verses, and as a somewhat severe though able political writer, he was in private life one of the most pure, disinterested, and amiable of men. He had an almost womanly sensibility to human suffering; he was true to friendship, and inflexibly devoted to what he deemed the cause of truth, honor, and patriotism. He furnishes an instance of what has often happened before, in which the literary man seems a vindictive satirist, while the social man—friend, neighbor, father, husband—is full of the milk

adelphia when her father was member of Congress, and recited many interesting anecdotes of Washington and Hamilton, and other great men, whom she had there seen. I was often at the house, and here frequently saw her Uncle, Col. Trumbull, the artist, with his European wife, about whom there was an impenetrable mystery. She was a beautiful woman, and of elegant manners: her features are well preserved in her husband's portrait of her, in the Trumbull Gallery, at Yale College. It was rumored that she was the daughter of an English earl, but her name and lineage were never divulged.\*

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of human kindness. He had great abilities, and only missed a permanent reputation by setting too light a value upon his performances, and thus not bringing them up to a higher standard of criticism. He wrote too much and too rapidly for lasting fame.

\* Mr. Wadsworth was one of the few rich men who know how to make a good distribution of their wealth. His charities during his lifetime were numerous, and bestowed with kindness and judgment. He founded at Hartford the Wadsworth Atheneum, which is an interesting and useful institution, including many antiquities, works of art, and a valuable historical library.

Among the interesting objects connected with the city of Hartford, is his country-seat on Talcott's mountain—embracing a lake, a tower, and other attractions. The situation is beautiful, and the whole is tastefully arranged. To the west of it lies the valley of Farmington river, exhibiting a varied landscape of winding streams, swelling hills, and cultivated fields, all seen through the enchanting azure of distance. To the east is the Connecticut, rolling proudly through its borders, crowned with the richest cultivation, and dotted with towns and villages, presenting some thirty spires in a single view.

The scene presented to the eye from the top of this tower—which rises seventy feet above its platform, situated upon a high point of rock—is indeed unrivaled. The immediate objects beneath—the tasteful villa, the quiet lake, and, rising up from its shores—

“Rocks, mounds, and knolls, confusedly hurled,  
The fragments of an earlier world”—

suggesting a resemblance to the wild borders of Loch Katrine, constr-



It was, I believe, through Mr. Wadsworth's influence that Miss Huntly, now Mrs. Sigourney, was induced to leave her home in Norwich, and make Hartford her residence. This occurred about the year 1814. Noiselessly and gracefully she glided into our young social circle, and ere long was its presiding genius. I shall not write her history, nor dilate upon her literary career—for who does not know them both by heart? Yet I may note her influence in this new relation—a part of which fell upon myself. Mingling in the gayeties of our social gatherings, and in no respect clouding their festivity, she led us all toward intellectual pursuits and amusements. We had even a literary cotery under her inspiration, its first meetings being held at Mr. Wadsworth's. I believe one of my earliest attempts at composition was made here. The ripples thus begun, extended over the whole surface of our young society, producing a lasting and refining effect. It could not but be beneficial thus to mingle in intercourse with one who has the angelic faculty of seeing poetry in all things, and good everywhere. Few persons living have exercised a wider influence than Mrs. Sigourney; no one that I now know, can look back upon a long and earnest career of such unblemished beneficence.

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tute a rare assemblage of beautiful and striking groups. It is sad to reflect that "lands and manors pass away," yet it is consoling to know that others live to enjoy them. Mr. Wadsworth is gone—but it gives me pleasure to state that my old friend, D. W., a thriving manufacturer of axes, is his successor.



In the immediate vicinity of Mr. Wadsworth, lived Dr. Coggeswell, a renowned surgeon and excellent physician. He was, withal, a man of refined tastes, and exceedingly easy and gracious address. In early life he had been associated with the "Hartford wits," and occasionally wrote verses, though more frequently of the sentimental than the satirical kind. His daughter, Alice, was deaf and dumb, if we speak of the ear and the lip; yet her soul heard and spoke in her eyes and her countenance. She excited universal interest by her sweetness of character, manners, and appearance; she was, in truth, an eloquent and persuasive lecturer upon the language, and beauty, and immortality of the soul—that lives above and beyond the senses.

Mr. Gallaudet, the founder of the Deaf and Dumb Asylum at Hartford, was a person of very diminutive stature, with a smooth, placid physiognomy—irradiated, however, by a remarkably large, expressive eye, rolling at you over his spectacles. Of a frail and feeble constitution, and a mind of no great compass, he still possessed two faculties which rendered his career glorious. He had a clearness and precision in his perceptions, which rendered his mental operations almost as exact and certain as the movements of mechanism. It was this which enabled him to master the elements of the art of teaching the deaf and dumb, and to carry that art—in its uses as well as its philosophy—greatly beyond its condition when

he entered upon it. This principle in the head was impelled to action by another in the heart—a deep conviction that it was his duty to be useful to his fellow-men. It is pleasing to observe how wide and ample a field may be harvested by a good man, even though he may not be a giant or a genius!

I must here tell you an anecdote still fresh in my recollection. When President Monroe made his tour through the New-England States, in the summer of 1817, the asylum was a novelty, and naturally enough was the pride of the good citizens of Hartford. Of course, the President was invited to see the performances of the new institution. He was scarcely out of his carriage, and delivered from the noise and confusion of his reception—for all the world turned out to see him—before he was hurried down to the place where the school was then kept.

A high central platform was prepared, like a throne, for the great man, and here he took his seat. Around were the spectators; on one side was Mr. Gallaudet, and Mr. Clerc, the well-known deaf and dumb professor from the school of the Abbé Sicard, in Paris. Mr. Gallaudet was a man of admirable address, and all being ready, he said to the President, in his smooth, seductive way—

“If your Excellency will be so kind as to ask some question, I will repeat it to Mr. Clerc on my fingers, and he will write an answer on the slate, to show the manner and facility of conversation by signs.”

The President, who was exceedingly jaded by his journey, looked obfuscated; but he changed the position of his legs, showing a consciousness of the question, and then fell into a very brown study. Everybody expected something profound—equal to the occasion, and worthy of the chief magistrate of the greatest nation on the face of the globe. We waited a long time, every minute seeming an hour, through our impatience. At last it became awkward, and Mr. Gallaudet insinuated—

“If your Excellency will be so kind as to ask some question, I will repeat it on my fingers to Mr. Clerc, and he will write an answer on the slate, to show the manner and facility of conversing by signs.”

The President again changed the position of his legs, and again meditated. We all supposed he was at the very bottom of the abyss of philosophy, hunting up some most profound and startling interrogation. Expectation was on tiptoe; every eye was leveled at the oracular lips, about to utter the amazing proposition. Still, he only meditated. A long time passed, and the impatience became agonizing. Again Mr. Gallaudet, seeming to fear that the great man was going to sleep, roused him by repeating his request. The President at last seemed conscious; his eye twinkled, his lips moved, sounds issued from his mouth—

“Ask him—how old he is!”—was the profound suggestion.

## LETTER XXXVI.

*Dr. Percival—His early Life—His Father's attempt to cure his Shyness—  
College Life—His First Love—His Medical Experience—His Poetical Ca-  
reer.*

MY DEAR C\*\*\*\*\*

I am glad to find, by your recent letter, that you approve of my hasty sketches of the men I have seen and known—even though they are not all of that general celebrity which creates, in advance, an interest in their behalf. No doubt the portrait of a man, whose renown has filled our ears, is more gratifying than one which merely presents the lineaments of an unknown, unheard-of individual. Yet every picture which is life-like—which possesses an obvious verisimilitude—is pleasing, especially if it seems to represent a type of some class of men, which we have seen in life. It is mainly upon this principle that the fictitious heroes and heroines of romance, interest us as deeply as even the celebrities of history. As I describe things I have seen, I hope my delineations may have so much seeming truth as to amuse you, even though they possess only that interest which attaches to all true pictures of humanity. I say this, not as an in-

introduction, especially suited to this chapter, for I am now going to speak of names that are familiar to you : I make these reflections upon your letter, only as a precaution against any criticisms you may offer upon the less pretentious miniatures scattered through these pages.

The news comes, even while I write, that Percival, the poet, is dead ! Yes—one by one, those I have known and cherished, are falling around me. Few of my early acquaintances are left, and I am but a lingerer among the graves of early friendship and love !

James Gates Percival was a native of Berlin,\* the residence of my family, and I knew him well. His father was a physician—a man of ability, and of resolute and energetic character. His mother was by nature of a susceptible and delicate organization, and she seems to have imparted to her son these qualities, with a tendency to excessive mental development. He early manifested a morbid shyness and shrinking sensitiveness, which his father sought to cure by harsh measures. On one occasion he put the child behind him on horseback, and rode into the thickest of a sham fight, during a regimental muster. The result was, that the boy was almost thrown into convulsions.

Dr. Percival died when James was still young, and

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\* Berlin consists of three parishes—Worthington, where my father resided, New Britain, and Kensington. The latter was Percival's birth-place.

after a time his mother married a respectable farmer of the village by the name of Porter. The young Percival made extraordinary progress in his studies, but was little understood by those around him. He entered college at the age of sixteen, and speedily attracted attention by his acquisitions and his compositions. At this period he was often at my father's house, in Berlin, and being subject to paroxysms of great depression of spirits, he deeply excited the interest of my mother. Although, on the whole, he pursued his education with avidity and ambition, yet he often wandered forth in lonesome places, nursing a moody melancholy, and at one period, he actually contemplated suicide. From this he was diverted—mainly, I believe, by my mother's timely counsel and other kindly offices.

About this time he was frequently in the society of a beautiful and accomplished young lady of the neighborhood; he botanized with her in the fields, and poetized with her in the library, and at last he thought himself in love. Months thus ran pleasantly on, when one day he made up his mind to give her a delicate hint of his condition. He did so, I believe, in verse. The young lady replied in plain prose, that she was engaged, and was speedily to be married! The poet came to the conclusion that this was a deceitful world, and wrote Byronic verses. In 1820 he published a volume of poems, including the first part of his *Prometheus*.

Having studied medicine, he went to South Caro-

lina the same year, and established himself at Charleston, as a physician. He told me afterward, that, at the end of some months, he had one patient, afflicted with sore lips. He prescribed a dose of salts, gratis, and this was a pretty fair example of his practice.

"I had got my name up for writing verses," said he, "and found myself ruined."

"How so?" said I.

"When a person is really ill, he will not send for a poet to cure him," was his answer.

Having little else before him, he directed his attention to literature, and published the first number of his *Clio*, 1822. Soon after, he returned to the North, and produced some miscellanies in prose and verse. At this period, he had excited a deep interest in the public mind, as well by his writings as his somewhat eccentric life and manners. The melancholy which pervaded his poetry, with fugitive pieces of great feeling and tenderness, together with a certain wildness in his air and manner, rendered him an object of general curiosity, and in many cases of deep sympathy. Of all this he seemed unconscious, and walked the world like one who neither accepted nor desired its friendship.

By the time he was twenty, he began to stand aloof from his fellow-man. I think he had been deeply injured—nay ruined—by the reading of Byron's works, at that precise age when his soul was in all



the sensitive bloom of spring, and its killing frost of atheism, of misanthropy, of pride, and scorn, fell upon it, and converted it into a scene of desolation. The want of a genial circle of appreciation, of love and friendship, around his early life, left this malign influence to deepen his natural shyness into a positive and habitual self-banishment from his fellow-man. Such is the sad interpretation I put upon his career.\*

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## LETTER XXXVII.

*A few Wayside Notes—The Poet Brainard—His first Introduction—Ripley's Tavern—Aunt Lucy—The little back-parlor—Brainard's Office—Anecdote—The Devil's Dun—The Lines on Niagara—Other Poems.*

MY DEAR C\*\*\*\*\*

I have told you that in the autumn of 1823 I set out to visit Europe; but a few previous events are needful to bring my narrative to that epoch. In 1821, clouds and darkness began to gather around my path. By a fall from a horse, I was put upon crutches

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\* The notice of Dr. Percival in Kettell's Specimens of American Poets, was written at my request by Rev. Royal Robbins, of Kensington parish, Berlin, in which the poet lived. It is a beautiful and just appreciation of his character at that time. I know of no person so competent as he to give the world a biography of Percival. He is familiar with the details of his whole career, and especially with the earlier portions of his life, and is, moreover, master of all the qualifications requisite to give interest and value to such a work

for more than a year, and a cane for the rest of my life. Ere long death entered my door, and my home was desolate. I was once more alone—save only that a child was left me, to grow to womanhood, and to die a youthful mother, loving and beloved\*—leaving an infant soon to follow her to the tomb. My affairs became embarrassed, my health failed, and my only hope of renovation was in a change of scene.

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\* Sweet Spirit passed! 'Tis not for thee  
Our bitter tears unmeasured flow—  
Thy path to Heaven is traced, but we,  
With grieving heart, must writhe below!

We mourn thy lost yet loving tone,  
That made endearing names more dear,  
And touched with music all its own  
The warm fond hearts that clustered near.

We mourn thy form—thy spirit bright,  
Which shone so late mid bridal flowers—  
And yet could pour angelic light  
Across the last tempestuous hours!

We mourn for thee—so sudden-flown,  
When least we thought from thee to sever—  
As if some star we deemed our own,  
At brightest hour had set forever!

Unpitying Fate! thy dark designs  
Can spare the weary, wasted, bent,  
Yet crush the fairest thing that shines  
Where peace and joy have pitched their tent!

Could not the youthful mother claim  
Exemption from thy stern decree?  
Could not the child that lisped her name,  
Extort one pitying tear from thee?

Ah, human woes are not thy care!  
The lightning, in its plunge of wrath,  
Turns not, with heedful thought, to spare  
The buzzing insect in its path!

But before I give you a sketch of my experience and observations abroad, I must present one portrait more—that of my friend Brainard.\* He came to Hartford in February, 1822, to take the editorial charge of the Connecticut Mirror—Mr. Stone, as I have stated, having left it a short time before. He was now twenty-six years old, and had gained some reputation for wit and poetical talent. One day a young man, small in stature, with a curious mixture of ease and awkwardness, of humor and humility, came into my office, and introduced himself as Mr. Brainard. I gave him a hearty welcome, for I had heard very pleasant accounts of him. As was natural, I made a complimentary allusion to his poems,

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Forgive us, Heaven! if thus we mourn

The lost on earth—the blest above—

So rudely from our bosom torn,

With all its clinging ties of love!

One bright, blest spot of sunshine played

Upon the landscape's varied breast—

Yet there the clouds have cast their shade

And there the deepest shadows rest!

\* John Gardiner Caulkins Brainard was the youngest son of Jeremiah G. Brainard, of New London, judge of the supreme court, whom I have already mentioned in the history of my military adventures in 1813. His two elder brothers, William F., a lawyer, and Dyer, a physician, were both men of wit and learning; the first died some years since, the latter is still living. John, of whom I now write, was born in 1795, educated at Yale, prepared for the law, and settled at Middletown 1819. He died at New London, in 1823. The portrait of him in Messrs. Duyckinck's "Cyclopædia of American Literature," is from an engraving in the *Token* for 1830, and that is taken from a miniature I had painted of him, by our mutual friend, Tisdale. It was from recollection, but gives a pretty good idea of the sad yet humorous, boyish yet manly, countenance of the original.

which I had seen and admired. A smile, yet shaded with something of melancholy, came over his face, as he replied—

“Don’t expect too much of me; I never succeeded in any thing yet. I never could draw a mug of cider without spilling more than half of it!”

I afterward found that much truth was thus spoken in jest: this was, in point of fact, precisely Brainard’s appreciation of himself. All his life, feeling that he could do something, he still entertained a mournful and disheartening conviction that, on the whole, he was doomed to failure and disappointment. There was sad prophecy in this presentiment—a prophecy which he at once made and fulfilled.

We soon became friends, and at last intimates. I was now boarding at “Ripley’s”—a good old fashioned tavern, over which presided Major Ripley, respected for revolutionary services, an amiable character, and a long Continental queue. In the administration of the establishment he was ably supported by his daughter, Aunt Lucy—the very genius of tavern courtesy, cookery, and comfort. Here Brainard joined me, and we took our rooms side by side. Thus for more than a year we were together, as intimate as brothers. He was of a child-like disposition, and craved constant sympathy. He soon got into the habit of depending upon me in many things, and at last—especially in dull weather, or when he was sad, or something went wrong with

him—he crept into my bed, as if it was his right. At that period of gloom in my own fortunes, this was as well a solace to me as to him. After my return from Europe we resumed these relations, and for some months more we were thus together.

Brainard's life has been frequently written. The sketch of him in Kettell's "Specimens," I furnished, soon after his death. Mr. Robbins, of Berlin, wrote a beautiful biographical memoir of him for Hopkins' edition of his poems, published at Hartford, in 1842. A more elaborate notice of his life, character, and genius, had been given in Whittier's edition of his "Remains," 1832. To this just and feeling memoir, by a kindred spirit—one every way qualified to appreciate and to illustrate his subject—I have now nothing to add, except a few personal recollections—such as were derived from my long intercourse and intimacy with him.

Perhaps I cannot do better than to begin at once, and give you a sketch of a single incident, which will reflect light upon many others. The scene opens in Miss Lucy's little back-parlor—a small, cozy, carpeted room, with two cushioned rocking-chairs, and a bright hickory fire. It is a chill November night, about seven o'clock of a Friday evening. The Mirror—Brainard's paper—is to appear on the morning of the morrow, it being a weekly sheet, and Saturday its day of publication. The week has thus far passed, and he has not written for it a line. How the days

have gone he can hardly tell. He has read a little—dipped into Byron, pored over the last Waverley novel, and been to see his friends; at all events, he had got rid of the time. He has not felt competent to bend down to his work, and has put it off till the last moment. No further delay is possible. He is now not well; he has a cold, and this has taken the shape of a swelling of the tonsils, almost amounting to quinsy, as was usual with him in such attacks.

Miss Lucy, who takes a motherly interest in him, tells him not to go out, and his own inclinations suggest the charms of a quiet evening in the rocking-chair, by a good fire—especially in comparison with going to his comfortless office, and drudging for the inky devils of the press. He lingers till eight, and then suddenly rousing himself, by a desperate effort, throws on his cloak and sallies forth. As was not uncommon, I go with him. A dim fire is kindled in the small Franklin stove in his office, and we sit down. Brainard, as was his wont, especially when he was in trouble, falls into a curious train of reflections, half comic and half serious.

“Would to heaven,” he says, “I were a slave. I think a slave, with a good master, has a good time of it. The responsibility of taking care of himself—the most terrible burden of life—is put on his master’s shoulders. Madame Roland, with a slight alteration, would have uttered a profound truth. She should have said—‘Oh, liberty, liberty, thou art a

humbug!’ After all, liberty is the greatest possible slavery, for it puts upon a man the responsibility of taking care of himself. If he goes wrong—why he’s damned! If a slave sins, he’s only flogged, and gets over it, and there’s an end of it. Now, if I could only be flogged, and settle the matter that way, I should be perfectly happy. But here comes my tormentor.”

The door is now opened, and a boy with a touseled head and inky countenance, enters, saying curtly—  
“Copy, Mr. Brainard!”

“Come in fifteen minutes!” says the editor, with a droll mixture of fun and despair.

Brainard makes a few observations, and sits down at his little narrow pine table—hacked along the edges with many a restless penknife. He seems to notice these marks, and pausing a moment, says—

“This table reminds me of one of my brother William’s stories. There was an old man in Groton, who had but one child, and she was a daughter. When she was about eighteen, several young men came to see her. At last she picked out one of them, and desired to marry him. He seemed a fit match enough, but the father positively refused his consent. For a long time he persisted, and would give no reason for his conduct. At last, he took his daughter aside, and said—‘Now, Sarah, I think pretty well of this young man in general, but I’ve observed that he’s given to whittling. There’s no harm in that, but the point



is this: he whittles and whittles, and never makes nothing! Now I tell you, I'll never give my only daughter to such a feller as that!' Whenever Bill told this story, he used to insinuate that this whittling chap, who never made any thing, was me! At any rate, I think it would have suited me, exactly."

Some time passed in similar talk, when at last Brainard turned suddenly, took up his pen and began to write. I sat apart, and left him to his work. Some twenty minutes passed, when, with a radiant smile on his face, he got up, approached the fire, and taking the candle to light his paper, read as follows:

"THE FALL OF NIAGARA.

"The thoughts are strange that crowd into my brain,  
While I look upward to thee. It would seem  
As if God pour'd thee from his 'hollow hand,'  
And hung his bow upon thy awful front;  
And spoke in that loud voice that seem'd to him  
Who dwelt in Patmos for his Saviour's sake,  
'The sound of many waters;' and had bade  
Thy flood to chronicle the ages back,  
And notch his cent'ries in the eternal rocks!"

He had hardly done reading, when the boy came. Brainard handed him the lines—on a small scrap of rather coarse paper—and told him to come again in half an hour. Before this time had elapsed, he had finished, and read me the following stanza:

"Deep calleth unto deep. And what are we,  
That hear the question of that voice sublime?"

Oh! what are all the notes that ever rung  
From war's vain trumpet by thy thundering side?  
Yea, what is all the riot man can make,  
In his short life, to thy unceasing roar?  
And yet, bold babbler, what art thou to Him  
Who drown'd a world, and heap'd the waters far  
Above its loftiest mountains? A light wave,  
That breathes and whispers of its Maker's might."

These lines having been furnished, Brainard left his office, and we returned to Miss Lucy's parlor. He seemed utterly unconscious of what he had done. I praised the verses, but he thought I only spoke warmly from friendly interest. The lines went forth, and produced a sensation of delight over the whole country. Almost every exchange paper that came to the office had extracted them: even then he would scarce believe that he had done any thing very clever. And thus, under these precise circumstances, were composed the most suggestive and sublime stanzas upon Niagara, that were ever penned. Brainard had never, as he told me, been within less than five hundred miles of the cataract, nor do I believe, that when he went to the office, he had meditated upon the subject. It was one of those inspirations which come to the poet—and often come like the lightning—in the very midst of clouds and darkness.

You will readily see, from the circumstances I have mentioned, that I knew the history of most of Brainard's pieces, as they came out, from time to time, in his newspaper. Nearly all of them were occasional

—that is, suggested by passing events or incidents in the poet's experience. The exquisite lines beginning,

“The dead leaves strew the forest walk,  
And wither'd are the pale wild-flowers”—

appeared a few days after he had taken leave of a young lady from Savannah, who had spent a month at our hotel, and had left an impression upon his sensitive heart, which the lines, mournful and touching as they are, only reveal to those who witnessed his emotions. Many were struck off in the extreme exigencies of the devil's dun—his very claws upon him. In these cases, he doubtless resorted to the treasures of his mind, which seems to have been largely stored with the scenery of his native State, and the legends connected with them. Two elements, in nearly equal proportion, seemed to fill his soul—the humorous and the sublime—and often in such contiguity, or even mixture, as to heighten the effect of each—this, however, being more noticeable in his conversation than his writings.

## LETTER XXXVIII.

*My first Voyage across the Atlantic—England—London—My Tour on the Continent—Return to England—Visit to Barley Wood—Hannah More—Inquiries as to Books for Education—Ireland—Dublin—The Giant's Causeway—Scotland—Scenery of the Lady of the Lake—Glasgow—Edinburgh.*

MY DEAR C\*\*\*\*\*

It was, as I have already told you, on the 16th of November, 1823, that I set sail in the *Canada*, Captain Macy, on my first visit to Europe. I have now before me four volumes of notes made during my tour; but be not alarmed—I shall not inflict them upon you. I might, perhaps, have ventured to publish them when they were fresh, but since that period the world has been inundated with tales of travels. I shall therefore only give you a rapid outline of my adventures, and a few sketches of men and things, which may perchance interest you.

Our voyage was—as usual at that season of the year—tempestuous. As we approached the British Islands, we were beset by a regular hurricane. On the 5th of December, the captain kindly informed us that we were almost precisely in the situation of the *Albion*,\* the day before she was wrecked on the rocky

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\* The *Albion* was a packet ship plying between New York and Liverpool. She sailed from the former port April 1, 1822, and went ashore on the 22d of the same month. She had twenty-four seamen and twenty-eight passengers: seven of the former and two of the latter, only, were saved.

headland of Kinsale—at the southeast extremity of Ireland—an event which had spread general gloom throughout the United States. As night set in, we were struck with a squall, and with difficulty the vessel was brought round, so as to lie to. The storm was fearful, and the frequent concussions of the waves upon the ship, sounding like reports of artillery, made her reel and stagger like a drunken man. The morning came at last, and the weather was fair, but our deck was swept of its boats, bulwarks, and hen-coops. Our old cow in her hovel, the covering of the steerage, and that of the companion-way, were saved. We had, however, some gratis sea-bathing in our berths—terribly suggestive of the chill temperature of that abyss which might soon be our grave. The next morning we took a pilot, and on the 8th of December entered the dock at Liverpool.

As this was my first experience at sea, I beg you to forgive this brief description. I had suffered fearfully by sea-sickness, and had scarce strength to walk

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Among the persons lost was Alexander W. Fisher, Professor of Mathematics in Yale College. He was a young man—twenty-eight years old—of fine genius, and great expectations were entertained as to his future achievements. A person who escaped from the wreck, whom I chanced to meet, told me that the last he saw of Mr. Fisher, he was in his berth with a pocket-compass in his hand, watching the course of the vessel. A moment after she struck, and he saw him no more.

The ship went to pieces on the rocks, in face of high perpendicular cliffs. The people of the neighborhood rendered all possible assistance, but their efforts were but partially successful. The struggles of the sufferers, clinging to ropes, yards, and points of the rocks, in the very sight of persons on shore, were fearful, and the details given of these scenes, rendered the event one of the most agonizing on record.

ashore. I felt such horror—such disgust of the sea, that I could easily have pledged myself never to venture upon it again. Strange to say, this all passed away like a dream: my strength revived, and even my constitution, shattered by long suffering, seemed to be renovated. With the return of health and spirits, my journey to London seemed like a triumphal march. Though it was December, the landscape was intensely green, while the atmosphere was dark as twilight. The canopy of heaven seemed to have come half way down, as if the sky had actually begun to fall. Yet this was England! Oh, what emotions filled my breast as I looked on Kenilworth, Warwick, and Litchfield, and at last on London!

I remained at the latter place about a month, and then went to Paris. In April I departed, and visiting Switzerland, and a portion of Germany, followed the Rhine to Cologne. Thence I traveled through Flanders and Holland, and taking a sloop at Rotterdam, swung down the Maese, and in May reached London, by way of the Thames.

I soon after departed for Bristol—taking the renowned cathedral at Salisbury and the Druidical ruin of Stonehenge in my way. Having reached that city and seen its sights, I hired a post-coach, and went to Barley-wood—some ten miles distant. Hannah More was still there! The house consisted of a small thatched edifice—half cottage and half villa—tidily kept, and garnished with vines and trellices, giving it a

cheerful and even tasteful appearance. Its site was on a gentle hill, sloping to the southeast, and commanding a charming view over the undulating country around, including the adjacent village of Wrington, with a wide valley sloping to the Bay of Bristol—the latter sparkling in the distance, and bounded by the Welch mountains, in the far horizon. Behind the house, and on the crown of the hill, was a small copse, threaded with neat gravel walks, and at particular points embellished with objects of interest. In one place there was a little rustic temple, with this motto—*Audi Hospes, contemnere opes*; in another, there was a stone monument, erected to the memory of Bishop Porteus, who had been a particular friend of the proprietor of the place. A little further on, I found another monument, with this inscription: “*To John Locke, born in this village, this monument is erected by Mrs. Montague, and presented to Hannah More.*” From this sequestered spot, an artificial opening was cut through the foliage of the trees, giving a view of the very house—about a mile distant—in which Locke was born! In another place was a small temple built of roots, which might have served for the shrine of some untamed race of Dryads.

Mrs. More was now seventy-nine years of age,\* and

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\* Hannah More was born at Stapleton, in 1744. She and her sisters established a boarding-school in this village, but afterward it was removed to Bristol, and became very successful. Hannah More early became a writer, and at the age of seventeen, she published a pastoral drama, entitled “Search after Happiness.” Being intimate with Gar-



was very infirm, having kept her room for two years. She was small, and wasted away. Her attire was of dark-red bombazine, made loose like a dressing-gown. Her eyes were black and penetrating, her face glowing with cheerfulness, through a lace-work of wrinkles. Her head-dress was a modification of the coiffure of her earlier days—the hair being slightly frizzed, and lightly powdered, yet the whole group of moderate dimensions.

She received me with great cordiality, and learning that I was from Hartford, immediately inquired about Mrs. Sigourney, Mr. Gallaudet, and Alice Cogswell: of the latter she spoke with great interest. She mentioned several Americans who had visited her, and others with whom she had held correspondence. Her mind and feelings were alive to every subject that was suggested. She spoke very freely of her writings and her career. I told her of the interest I had taken, when a child, in the story of the Shepherd of Salisbury Plain, upon which she recounted its history, remarking that the character of the hero was modeled from life, though the incidents were fictitious. Her tract, called "Village Politics, by Will Chip," was written at the request of the British Ministry,

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rick, she wrote several plays, which were performed. Afterward she regretted these works, her new religious views leading her to condemn the stage. She amassed a handsome fortune, and purchasing Barleywood, she fitted it up as I have described it. Soon after I was there, in consequence of the frauds of her servants, her means were so diminished, that she was obliged to leave it. She removed to Clifton, near Bristol, and died September, 1833.

and two million copies were sold the first year. She showed me copies of *Cœlebs in Search of a Wife*—the most successful of her works—in French and German, and a copy of one of her sacred dramas—"Moses in the Bullrushes"—on palm-leaves, in the Cingalese tongue—it having been translated into that language by the missionary school at Ceylon. She showed me also the knife with which the leaf had been prepared, and the scratches made in it to receive the ink. She expressed a warm interest in America, and stated that Wilberforce had always exerted himself to establish and maintain good relations between Great Britain and our country. I suggested to her that in the United States, the general impression—that of the great mass of the people—was that the English were unfriendly to us. She said it was not so. I replied that the Americans all read the English newspapers, and generally, the products of the British press; that feelings of dislike, disgust, animosity, certainly pervaded most of these publications, and it was natural to suppose that these were the reflections of public opinion in Great Britain. At all events, our people regarded them as such, and hence inferred that England was our enemy. She expressed great regret at this state of things, and said all good people should strive to keep peace between the two countries: to all which I warmly assented.

My interview with this excellent lady was, on the whole, most gratifying. Regarding her as one of the

greatest benefactors of the age—as, indeed, one of the most remarkable women that had ever lived—I looked upon her not only with veneration but affection. She was one of the chief instruments by which the torrent of vice and licentiousness, emanating from the French Revolution and inundating the British Islands, was checked and driven back : she was even, to a great extent, the permanent reformer of British morals and manners, as well among the high as the humble. And besides, I felt that I owed her a special debt, and my visit to her was almost like a pilgrimage to the shrine of a divinity. When I left America, I had it in mind to render my travels subservient to a desire I had long entertained of making a reform—or at least an improvement—in books for youth. I had made researches in London, France, and Germany, for works that might aid my design. It is true I had little success, for while scientific and classical education was sedulously encouraged on the continent as well as in England, it seemed to be thought, either that popular education was not a subject worthy of attention, or that Dilworth and Mother Goose had done all that could be done. In this interview with the most successful and most efficient teacher of the age, I had the subject still in mind ; and discerning by what she had accomplished, the vast field that was open, and actually inviting cultivation, I began from this time to think of attempting to realize the project I had formed. It is true that, in some respects, the

example I had just contemplated was different from my own scheme. Hannah More had written chiefly for the grown-up masses; I had it in contemplation to begin further back—with the children. Her means, however, seemed adapted to my purpose: her success, to encourage my attempt. She had discovered that truth could be made attractive to simple minds. Fiction was, indeed, often her vehicle, but it was not her end. The great charm of these works which had captivated the million, was their verisimilitude. Was there not, then, a natural relish for truth in all minds, or at least was there not a way of presenting it, which made it even more interesting than romance? Did not children love truth? If so, was it necessary to feed them on fiction? Could not history, natural history, geography, biography, become the elements of juvenile works, in place of fancies and giants, and mere monsters of the imagination? These were the inquiries that from this time filled my mind.

Taking leave of Barley-wood and its interesting occupant, I traversed Wales, and embarking at Holyhead, passed over to Ireland. Having seen Dublin, with the extraordinary contrasts of sumptuousness in some of its streets and edifices, with the fearful squalidness and poverty in others—I passed on to the North. Having taken a wondering view of the Giants' Causeway, I returned to Belfast, embarked in a steamboat, and went over to Greenock. Thence I proceeded

toward Dumbarton, and in the early evening, as I approached the town in a small steamer, I actually realized, in the distance before me, the scene of the song—

“The sun has gone down behind lofty Ben Lomond,  
And left the red clouds to preside o’er the scene.”

On the morrow I went to Loch Lomond, crossing the lake in a steamboat ; thence on foot to Callender, and spent two days around Loch Katrine, amid the scenery of the Lady of the Lake. With a copy of that poem in my hand, which I had bought of a peasant on the borders of Loch Lomond, I easily traced out the principal landmarks of the story : “Ellen’s Isle,” nearly in the middle of the lake ; on the northern shore, “the Silver Strand,” where the maiden met Fitz James ; far to the east, Benain, rearing its “forehead fair” to the sky ; to the south, the rocky pyramid called “Roderick’s Watch-tower ;” and still beyond, the “Goblin’s Cave.” Leaving the lake, I passed through the Trosachs, a wild rocky glen, and the scene of the most startling events in the poem. At last I came to Coilantogle Ford, where the deadly struggle took place between the two heroes of the poem—Roderick and Fitz James. Finally, I went to the borders of Loch Achray—a placid sheet of water—beautiful by nature, but still more enchanting through the delightful associations of poetic art.

“The minstrel came once more to view  
The eastern ridge of Benvenue,

For ere he parted he would say,  
 Farewell to lovely Loch Achray.  
 Where shall he find, in foreign land,  
 So lone a lake, so sweet a strand !”

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But I must forbear. I have pledged myself not to weary you with descriptions of scenery, and especially with that which is familiar to you in twenty books of travels. Forgive me this instance of weakness, and I will try not to sin again—at least till I get out of Scotland. Having spent two days in this region of poetry and romance, I left for Glasgow, and at last reached Edinburgh.



## LETTER XXXIX.

*Edinburgh—The Court of Sessions—Uranstoun, Cockburn, Moncrief—  
 Lockhart—Jeffrey—Sir Walter Scott.*

MY DEAR C\*\*\*\*\*

Think of being in Edinburgh, and Scott, Jeffrey, Chalmers, Dugald Stuart, Lockhart, there ! It was then decidedly the literary metropolis of the Three Kingdoms—not through the amount of its productions, but their superiority. The eloquent, sparkling, trenchant Edinburgh Review was the type of Scottish genius ; the heavy Quarterly represented London. I had several letters of introduction—among

them one to Blackwood, another to Constable, another to Miss Y.... The latter proved fortunate. Her father was a Writer to the Signet—an elderly gentleman of excellent position, and exceedingly fond of showing off “Auld Reekie.” Well indeed might he be, for of all the cities I have seen, it is, in many respects, the most interesting. I am told it is gloomy in winter, but now it was the zenith of spring. The twilight did not wholly disappear till twelve, and the dawn was visible at one. If nature, in these high latitudes, falls into a harsh and savage humor in winter, it makes ample amends in summer.

The very day after delivering my letters, Mr. Y.... called on me, and showed me the lions of the town. Many of them, all indeed, were interesting, but I pass them by, and shall only linger a short time at the Court of Sessions, which is the supreme civil court of Scotland. This, with the High Court of Justiciary—the supreme criminal court—forms the College of Justice, and constitutes the supreme judicial system of Scotland. Their sessions are held in the old Parliament House, situated in the center of the Old Town.

We entered a large Gothic hall, opening, as I observed, into various contiguous apartments. Here I saw a considerable number of persons, mostly lawyers and their clients—some sauntering, some meditating—some gathered in groups and conversing together. I noticed that many of the former, and



more especially the older members of the bar, wore gowns and wigs; others wore gowns only, and still others were in the ordinary dress. I afterward was told that it was wholly at the option of individuals to adopt this costume, or not; in general, it was regarded as going out of fashion. There was a large number of people distributed through the several apartments, and in the grand hall there was a pervading hum of voices which seemed to rise and rumble and die away amid the groinings of the roof above.

Among the persons in this hall, a man some thirty years of age, tall and handsome, dressed in a gown but without the wig, attracted my particular attention. He was walking apart, and there was a certain look of coldness and haughtiness about him. Nevertheless, for some undefinable reason, he excited in me a lively curiosity. I observed that his eye was dark and keen, his hair nearly black, and though cut short, slightly curled. He carried his head erect, its largely developed corners behind, giving him an air of self-appreciation. His features were small, but sharply defined; his lips were close, and slightly disdainful and sarcastic in their expression.

There was a striking combination of energy and elegance in the general aspect of this person; yet over all, I must repeat, there was something also of coldness and pride. Upon his face, expressive of vigor and activity—mental and physical—there was a visible tinge of discontent.

"Who is that gentleman?" said I, to my guide.

"That large, noble-looking person, with a gown and wig? That is Cranstoun, one of our first lawyers, and the brother-in-law of Dugald Stuart."

"No: that person beyond and to the left? He is without a wig."

"Oh, that's Cockburn—a fiery whig, and one of the keenest fellows we have at the bar."

"Yes: but I mean that younger person, near the corner."

"Oh, that small, red-faced, freckled man? Why that's Moncrief—a very sound lawyer. His father, Sir Harry Moncrief, is one of the most celebrated divines in Scotland."

"No, no: it is that tall, handsome, proud-looking person, walking by himself."

"Oh, I see: that's Lockhart—Sir Walter Scott's son-in-law. Would you like to know him?"

"Yes."

And so I was introduced to a man\* who, at that time, was hardly less an object of interest to me than

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\* J. G. Lockhart was a native of Scotland, and born in 1794. In 1826, he became editor of the Quarterly Review, and removed to London. In 1853, he resigned this situation in consequence of ill health. His biography of his father-in-law—Sir Walter Scott—is well known and highly appreciated. The latter part of his life, Lockhart was afflicted with deafness, which withdrew him much from society. He died in 1854: his wife had died in London, 1837. His son, John Hugh Lockhart, to whom Scott dedicated his History of Scotland, under the title of Hugh Littlejohn, died early. Lockhart had a daughter, who also has a daughter, and these two are now the only living descendants of Sir Walter.

Scott himself. Though a lawyer by profession, he had devoted himself to literature, and was now in the very height of his career. "Peter's Letters to his Kinsfolk," "Valerius," and other works, had given him a prominent rank as a man of talent; and besides, in 1820, he had married the eldest daughter of the "Great Unknown." My conversation with him was brief at this time, but I afterward became well acquainted with him.

My guide now led me into one of the side-rooms, where I saw a judge and jury, and a lawyer addressing them. The latter was a very small man, without gown or wig, apparently about forty years of age, though he might be somewhat older. He was of dark complexion, with an eye of intense blackness, and almost painfully piercing expression. His motions were quick and energetic, his voice sharp and penetrating—his general aspect exciting curiosity rather than affection. He was speaking energetically, and, as we approached the bar, my conductor said to me in a whisper—"Jeffrey!"

We paused, and I listened intently. The case in itself seemed dry enough—something, I believe, about a *stoppage in transitu*. But Jeffrey's pleading was admirable—clear, progressive, logical. Occasionally, in fixing upon a weak point of his adversary, he displayed a leopard-like spring of energy, altogether startling. He seized upon a certain point in the history of the case, and insisted that the property in question rested

at that period in the hands of the defendant's agent, for at least a fortnight. This he claimed to be fatal to his adversary's plea. Having stated the facts, with a clearness which seemed to prove them, he said, turning with startling quickness upon his antagonist—"Now, I ask my learned brother to tell me, what was the state of the soul during that fortnight?" To a jury of Scotch Presbyterians, familiar with theological metaphysics, this allusion was exceedingly pertinent and effective.

We passed into another room. Three full-wigged judges were seated upon a lofty bench, and beneath them, at a little table in front, was a large man, bent down and writing laboriously. As I approached, I caught a side-view of his face. There was no mistaking him—it was Sir Walter himself!

Was it not curious to see the most renowned personage in the three kingdoms, sitting at the very feet of these men—they the court, and he the clerk? They were indeed all "lords," and their individual names were suggestive to the ear: one was Robertson, son of the historian of Charles V.; another was Gillies, brother of the renowned Grecian scholar of that name; another, Mackenzie, son of the author of the *Man of Feeling*. These are high titles—but what were they to the author of *Waverley*?

Mr. Y.... introduced me to him at once, breaking in upon his occupation with easy familiarity. As he arose from his seat, I was surprised at his robust, vig-

orous frame. He was very nearly six feet in height, full chested, and of a farmer-like aspect. His complexion seemed to have been originally sandy, but now his hair was gray. He had the rough, freckled, weather-beaten skin of a man who is much in the open air; his eye was small and gray, and peered out keenly and inquisitively from beneath a heavy brow, edged with something like gray, twisted bristles—the whole expression of his face, however, being exceedingly agreeable. He wore a gown, but no wig. It would have been a sin to have covered up that wonderful head, towering, as we have all seen it in his portraits—the throne of the richest intellect in the world.\*

He greeted me kindly—the tone of his voice being hearty, yet with a very decided Scotch accent. I told him I had been to the Highlands. “It is a little too early,” said he; “I always wish my friends to wait till the middle of June, for then the ash is in its glory. Here in the north, summer, as you know, is a laggard. In America it visits you in better season?”

“I am from New England, and our forests are not in full leaf till June.”

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\* Scott was born in 1771—so at this time, 1824, he was fifty-three years old, at the highest point of his fame, and in the full vigor of his genius. In 1826 he was involved in the failure of the Ballantynes—printers and publishers—to an extent of \$700,000. He made prodigious efforts to liquidate this immense debt, and had laid the foundation for its payment, when his overwrought brain gave way, and he died of paralysis, September 21, 1832. He married Miss Carpenter in 1797, and had four children: Walter, Sophia, who married Lockhart, Ann, and Charles. All are now dead. Abbotsford remains in the family.

"Yes, your climate there is somewhat like ours. Are you from Boston?"

"I am from Hartford, in Connecticut—of which you have perhaps never heard."

"My American geography is not very minute; yet Connecticut is a familiar name to my ear. Do you know Mr. Irving?"

"I have never seen him but once."

"Mr. Cooper?"

"Yes, I know him well."

"Do you stay long in Edinburgh?"

"A few weeks."

"We shall meet again, then, and talk these matters over."

So I had seen the author of *Waverley*! I leave you to guess my emotions, for I could not describe them.

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## LETTER XL.

*Preparations for a Ride—Mr. Jeffrey in a Rough-and-tumble—A Glance at Edinburgh from the Braid Hills—A Shower—The Maids of the Mist—Durable Impressions.*

MY DEAR C\*\*\*\*\*

I found a note—May 31st—at my hotel, from Miss Y . . . , inviting me to breakfast. I went at ten, and we had a pleasant chat. She then proposed a ride, and I accepted. She was already in her riding-habit,

and putting on a hat and collar—both of rather masculine gender, yet not uncomely—we went forth. We were in Queen-street, No. 48; passing along a short distance, we turned a corner to the left, mounted the steps of a fine house, and rang. We entered, and I was introduced to the proprietor, Mrs. Russell. She led us into another room, and there, on the floor, in a romp with her two boys, was a small, dark man. He arose, and behold, it was Francis Jeffrey!\* Think of the first lawyer in Scotland—the lawgiver of the great Republic of Letters throughout Christendom—having a rough-and-tumble on the floor, as if he were himself a boy! Let others think as they will—I loved him from that moment; and ever after, as I read his criticisms—cutting and scorching as they often were—I fancied that I could still see a kind and genial spirit shining through them all. At least it is certain that, behind his editorial causticity, there was in private life a fund of gentleness and geniality

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\* Mr. Jeffrey was born in Edinburgh in 1773. He was admitted to the bar at the age of twenty-one; having little practice for a time, he sedulously pursued the study of belles-lettres, history, ethics, criticism, &c. In 1802, at the age of twenty-nine, he founded the Edinburgh Review, of which he continued as principal editor till 1829—placing it above every other work of the kind which had ever appeared. In 1816 he was acknowledged to be at the head of the Scottish bar as an advocate. Having held other high stations, he was appointed, in 1830, Lord-Advocate of Scotland, and became a member of Parliament. In 1834 he was raised to the bench as one of the judges of the Court of Sessions. He died at Edinburgh in 1850. He married in 1813, at New York, Miss Wilkes, grand-niece of the celebrated John Wilkes of England. In 1815 he became the occupant of the villa of Craigerook, near Edinburgh, anciently a monastery, but improved and beautified. Here he was residing at the time I saw him.



which endeared him to all who enjoyed his intimacy. I was now introduced to him, and he seemed a totally different being from the fierce and fiery gladiator of the legal arena, where I had before seen him. His manners were gentle and gentlemanly—polite to the ladies and gracious to me.

Jeffrey's house was some two miles from town. His custom was to come to the city on horseback—and Mrs. Russell being his friend, he frequently stopped at her house, leaving his horse in her stable. Some gossiping scandal arose from this intimacy, but it was, of course, not only idle, but absurd. We found Mrs. Russell in a riding-dress, and prepared to accompany us in our excursion. Taking leave of Mr. Jeffrey, we went to the stable, where were nearly a dozen horses, of various kinds and adapted to various uses. Miss Y . . . . chose a shaggy gray pony, half savage and half pet; Mrs. Russell mounted a long, lean, clean-limbed hunter; and I, at her suggestion, took Mr. Jeffrey's mare—a bay, rollicking cob, with a gait like a saw-mill—as I found to my cost.

We walked our steeds gently out of town, but on leaving the pavements the ladies struck into a vigorous trot. Up and down the hills we went, the turnpike gates flying open at our approach, the servant behind, paying the tolls. We passed out of the city by Holy Rood, and swept round to the east of Arthur's seat, leaving Portobello on the left. We rode

steadily, noting a few objects as we passed, until at last, reaching an elevated mound, we paused, and the ladies directed my attention to the scenes around. We were some two miles south of the town, upon one of the slopes of the Braid Hills. Ah, what a view was before us! The city, a vast, smoking hive, to the north; and to the right, Arthur's Seat, bald and blue, seeming to rise up and almost peep into its streets and chimneys. Over and beyond all, was the sea. The whole area between the point where we stood and that vast azure line, blending with the sky, was a series of abrupt hills and dimpling valleys, threaded by a network of highways and byways—honeycombed in spots by cities and villages, and elsewhere sprinkled with country-seats.

It is an unrivaled scene of varied beauty and interest. The natural site of Edinburgh is remarkable, consisting of three rocky ledges, steeping over deep ravines. These have all been modified by art; in one place a lake has been dried up, and is now covered with roads, bridges, tenements, gardens, and lawns. The sides of the cliffs are in some instances covered with masses of buildings, the edifices occasionally rising tier upon tier—in one place presenting a line of houses a dozen stories in height! The city is divided by a deep chasm into two distinct parts, the Old Town, dun and smoky, and justifying the popular appellation of "Auld Reekie," or Old Smoky; the other the New Town, with all the fresh

architecture and all the rich and elaborate embellishments of a modern city. Nearly from the center of the old town rises the Castle, three hundred and eighty feet above the level of the sea—on one side looking down almost perpendicularly, two hundred feet into the vale beneath—on the other holding communication with the streets by means of a winding pathway. In the new town is Calton Hill, rich with monuments of art and memorials of history, and suggesting to the mind a resemblance to the Acropolis of Athens. From these two commanding positions, the scenes are unrivaled.

But I forget that I have taken you to the Braid Hills. The panorama, from this point, was not only beautiful to the eye, but a rich harvest to the mind. My amiable guides directed my attention to various objects—some far and some near, and all with names familiar to history or song or romance. Yonder mass of dun and dismal ruins was Craigmillar's Castle, once the residence of Queen Mary. Nearly in the same direction, and not remote, is the cliff, above whose bosky sides peer out the massive ruins of Roslin Castle; further south are glimpses of Dalkeith Palace, the sumptuous seat of the Duke of Buccleugh; there is the busy little village of Lasswade, which takes the name of "Gandercleugh" in the "Tales of my Landlord;" yonder winds the Esk and there the Galawater—both familiar in many a song; and there is the scenery of the "Gentle Shepherd," presenting

the very spot where that inimitable colloquy took place between Peggy and her companion, Jenny—

“Gae farer up the burn to Habbie’s How,  
Where a’ the sweets o’ spring an’ summer grow :  
Between twa birks, out o’er a little linn,  
The water fa’s and makes a singan din :  
A pool, breast deep, beneath as clear as glass,  
Kisses wi’ easy whirls the bordering grass.  
We’ll end our washing while the morning’s cool,  
And when the day grows hot, we’ll to the pool,  
There wash oursels—it’s healthful now in May,  
An’ sweetly caller on sae warm a day.”

While we were surveying these unrivaled scenes, the rain began to fall in a fine, insinuating mizzle: soon large drops pattered through the fog, and at last there was a drenching shower. I supposed the ladies would seek some shelter: not they—maids of the mist—accustomed to all the humors of this drizzly climate, and of course defying them. They pulled off their green vails, and stuffed them into their saddle-pockets; then chirruping to their steeds, they sped along the road, as if mounted on broomsticks. I was soon wet to the skin, and so, doubtless, were they—if one might suggest such a thing. However, they took to it as ducks to a pond. On we went, the water—accelerated by our speed—spouting in torrents from our stirrups. In all my days, I had never such an adventure. And the coolness with which the ladies took it—that was the most remarkable. Indeed,

it was provoking—for as they would not accept sympathy, of course they could not give it, though my reeking condition would have touched any other heart than theirs. On we went, till at last coming to the top of a hill, we suddenly cropped out into the sunshine—the shower still scudding along the valley beneath us. We continued our ride, getting once more soaked on our way, and again drying in the sun. At last we reached home, having made a circuit of fifteen miles. Scarcely a word was said of the rain. I saw my mermaid friends to their residences, and was thankful when I got back to the hotel. What with the shower, and a slight cold which ensued—I did not get the trot of Jeffrey's mare out of my bones for a fortnight. Indeed, long after, during rough weather, when the gust and rain dashed against my window, the beast sometimes visited me in sleep, coming in the shape of a nightmare, carrying me at a furious rate, with two charming witches before, beckoning me on to a race. As a just moral of this adventure—I suggest to all Americans, who ride with Scotch ladies around Edinburgh, not to go forth in their best dress-coat, and pantaloons having no straps beneath the boot.

## LETTER XLI.

*William Blackwood—The Magazine—A Dinner at Blackwood's—James Ballantyne—Lord Byron and Lady Caroline Lamb—The General Assembly of Scotland—Dr. Chalmers.*

MY DEAR C\*\*\*\*\*

One or two more selections from my journal, and we will leave Edinburgh. I had delivered my letter of introduction to Blackwood, and he had treated me very kindly. He was, professionally, a mere book-seller and publisher—a plain, short, stocky person, with a large head, bald and flat on the top. He spoke broad Scotch, or rather sang it, for although all spoken language, in every country, has its cadences, in Scotland it is a veritable song. This is more noticeable among the illiterate, and especially the old women. I sometimes thought they were mocking me, so emphatic were their inflexions and modulations. I have since observed similar intonations in other countries, especially in Italy, where the rising and falling of the voice is so marked as to appear like an affectation of musical cadenzas, even in conversation.

Nevertheless, Mr. Blackwood was an exceedingly intelligent and agreeable gentleman. The Magazine\* which bears his name, was then in its glory,

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\* Blackwood's Magazine was founded in April, 1817, the office of publication being the proprietor's bookstore, 17 Prince-street. The founder, William Blackwood, died some years since, and the Magazine is

and of course a part of its radiance shone on him. He was a man of excellent judgment, even in literary matters, and his taste, no doubt, contributed largely to the success of the Magazine. He was in familiar intercourse with the celebrities of the day—and a bright constellation they were. He spoke as familiarly of great names—Scott, Lockhart, Hogg, Wilson—sacred to me, as Appleton and Putnam and the Harpers do of Irving, Halleck, and Bryant, or Ticknor &

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continued by his sons. In general, its tone has not been friendly to America, and while I was there an article in the May number, 1824, upon our country, then just issued, excited some attention, and I was frequently interrogated respecting it. It was entitled the "Five Presidents of the United States," and though it was written as by an Englishman, perhaps in order to secure its insertion, Blackwood told me it was from the pen of a distinguished American, then in London. It was a somewhat slashing review of the administrations of the presidents, from Washington to Monroe, the latter being then in office. It embraced sketches of Adams, Clay, Crawford, and Jackson—the prominent candidates for the presidency. The following is part of the notice of Adams.

Supposing a European ambassador to visit Washington, and is introduced into the President's house, "He sees a little man writing at a table, nearly bald, with a face quite formal and destitute of expression; his eyes running with water—his slippers down at the heel—his fingers stained with ink—in summer wearing a striped sea-sucker coat, and white trowsers, and dirty waistcoat, spotted with ink—his whole dress altogether not worth a couple of pounds; or in a colder season, habited in a plain blue coat, much the worse for wear, and other garments in proportion—not so respectable as we may find in the old-clothes bag of almost any Jew in the street. This person, whom the ambassador mistakes for a clerk in a department, and only wonders, in looking at him, that the President should permit a man to appear before him in such dress, proves to be the President of the United States himself!"

The article was written with vigor and discrimination, and excited a good deal of attention. Though free, and by no means dainty in its criticisms, it was, on the whole, just, and produced a favorable impression in our behalf. The author, whoever he was, evidently possessed eminent qualifications for magazine writing.



Fields of Prescott and Longfellow. Was not that a time to be remembered?

Of course I was gratified at receiving from him a note, inviting me to dine with him the next day. His house was on the south of the old town—nearly two miles distant. The persons present were such as I should myself have selected: among them Lockhart and James Ballantyne. I sat next the latter, and found him exceedingly agreeable and gentlemanlike. He was a rather large man, handsome, smooth in person and manner, and very well dressed. You will remember that at this time, it was not acknowledged by Scott or his friends that he was the author of the *Waverley* novels. Perhaps the mystery was even promoted by them, for, no doubt, it added adventitious interest to his works. However, the veil was not closely preserved in the circle of intimacy. Ballantyne said to me, in the course of a conversation which turned upon the popularity of authors, as indicated by the sale of their works—"We have now in course of preparation forty thousand volumes of Scott's poems and the works of the author of *Waverley*"—evidently intimating the identity of their authorship.

There was nothing remarkable about our meal: it was like an English dinner, generally—ample, substantial, administered with hospitality, and discussed with relish. There was a certain seriousness and preparation about it, common in Europe, but un-

common in our country. We rush to the table as if eating was an affair to be dispatched in the shortest possible time : to linger over it would seem to be an indecency. The Englishman, on the contrary, arranges his business for his dinner ; he prepares his mind for it ; he sets himself to the table, and adjusts his legs beneath, for it ; he unfolds his napkin and lays it in his lap, or tucks a corner within his waistcoat, for it ; he finally qualifies himself the better to enjoy it, by taking a loving survey of the good things before him and the good friends around him. He begins leisurely, as if feeling that Providence smiles upon him, and he would acknowledge its bounties by prolonging the enjoyment of them. As he proceeds, he spices his gratification by sips of wine, exchanges of compliments with the ladies and convivial chat, right and left, with his neighbors. The host is attentive, the hostess lends a smiling countenance, the servants are ubiquitous, and put your wishes into deeds, without the trouble of your speaking to them.

The first half hour has a certain earnestness about it, apparently occupied in reducing the Malakoffs of beef, Mamelons of mutton, and Redans of poultry—that come one after another. The victory is, at last, substantially won : all that remains is to capture the pies, cakes, tarts, ices, creams, fruits, &c., which is usually done with a running artillery of light wit. Conversation ensues ; now and then all listen to some good talker ; perhaps a story-teller catches,

for a time, the attention of the company, and then again all around resolves itself into a joyous and jovial confusion of tongues. An hour is past, and the ladies retire. The gentlemen fill their glasses, and offer them a parting toast; then they drink "The Queen," and give themselves up to social enjoyment.

And so it was on this occasion—only that we drank the King, instead of the Queen, for George IV. was then upon the throne. Mr. Blackwood was living in a plain but comfortable style, and garnished his entertainment with a plain, simple hospitality—which lost nothing by his occasional interjections of very broad Scotch. It was delightful to see the easy intimacy of the persons present: they frequently called each other by their Christian names—using terms of endearment, which with us would seem affected, perhaps absurd. "Jammy, dear, tak some wine yoursel, and hand it to me!" said Blackwood to Ballantyne, and the latter answered in a similar tone of familiar kindness. The whole intercourse of the company seemed warmed and cheered by these simple, habitual courtesies. Our own manners, I think, under similar circumstances, must appear bald and chilling, in comparison.

Nor was there any thing remarkable in the conversations—save only what related to Byron. The news of his death at Missolonghi, on the 19th of April, had reached Scotland a few weeks before, and produced

a profound sensation. Even while I was there, the interest in the subject had not subsided. Mr. Lockhart had not known Byron, personally, but he was in London soon after his departure for the continent, and at several subsequent periods, and he gave us many interesting details respecting him. He was frequently at Lady Caroline Lamb's soirées, where he met the literary celebrities of London, and especially the younger and gayer portion of them. Her ladyship had flirted with the lordly poet in the heyday of his fame, and it was said, condescended to visit him in the guise of a page—her reputation being of that salamander quality, which could pass through such fire and suffer no damage. Her lover proved fickle, and at last ungrateful, and she retaliated in the novel of "Glenarvon"—venting her rage upon him by depicting him as "having an imagination of flame playing around a heart of ice."

At the time Lockhart thus mingled in Lady Caroline's circle, Byron was the frequent theme of comment. She had a drawer-full of his letters, and intimate friends were permitted to read them. She had also borrowed of Murray the poet's manuscript autobiography given to Moore, and had copied some of its passages. This was soon discovered, and she was obliged to suppress them—but still passages of them got into circulation. The work was written in a daring, reckless spirit, setting at defiance all the laws of propriety, and even of decency. One of the chapters

consisted of a rhyming list of his acquaintances, at the period of his highest fashionable success, in London—dashed off with amazing power—yet in such terms of profanity as to forbid repetition, at least in print. It was obvious, from what was said by Mr. Lockhart and others, that such were the gross personalities, the shameful outrages of decorum, and the general licentiousness of this production, that it was impossible for any respectable publisher to be concerned in giving it to the world. The consignment of it to the flames, by his friends, was as much dictated by regard to their own characters, as to the fame of the author, which was in a certain degree committed to their keeping.

We sat down to dinner at seven, and got up at eleven. After a short conversation with the ladies, we took our departure. As I was getting into my carriage, Mr. Lockhart proposed to me to walk back to town, a distance of a mile and a half. I gladly accepted this proposition, and we had a very interesting conversation. Upon intimacy, Lockhart's coldness wholly disappeared. He spoke in an easy, rattling way, very much in the manner of the freer portions of Peter's Letters. The good dinner had doubtless cheered him a little; but not only on this, but other occasions I had evidence of a more genial nature than might have been supposed to exist beneath the haughty armor which he seemed to wear toward the world.

The next day I went to St. Giles's Church,\* to see the General Assembly, then holding its annual session there. This body consisted of nearly four hundred members, chosen by different parishes, boroughs, and universities. The sessions are attended by a Commissioner appointed by the crown, but he is seated outside of the area assigned to the assembly, and has no vote, and no right of debate. He sits under a pavilion, with the insignia of royalty, and a train of gaily-dressed pages. He opens the sessions in the name of the King, the Head of the Church: the moderator then opens it in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, *the only true Head of the Church!* It appears that the Scotch, in bargaining for a union with England, took good care to provide for their religious independence, and this they still jealously preserve: the Irish, on the contrary, were sold out, and treated like a conquered people. The commissioner, at this time, was Lord Morton—who, according to all the accounts I heard, was a disgrace to human nature.

The aspect of the Assembly was similar to that of the House of Commons—though somewhat graver. I observed that the debates were often stormy, with scraping of the floor, laughing aloud, and cries of “hear, hear!” The members were, in fact, quite disorderly, showing at least as little regard for decorum

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\* In 1844 a fine church, called Victoria Hall, was erected for the meetings of the General Assembly. It is of rich Mediæval Gothic architecture, with a spire two hundred and forty-six feet in height.

as ordinary legislatures. Sir Walter Scott once remarked, in my hearing, that it had never yet been decided how many more than six members could speak at once!

The persons here pointed out to me as celebrities were Dr. Chalmers, the famous pulpit orator, Dr. Cook, the ecclesiastical historian, and Dr. Baird, principal of the University, and caricatured in the print-shops under a rude portrait of his large face, nearly covered with hair, the whole labeled, *Principal Beard*. The first of these was now at the height of his fame. He had already begun those reforms which, some years later, resulted in a disruption of the Scottish Church. At this period the Assembly was divided into two opposite parties, the *Moderate*, and the *Sound*—the former contending for the old doctrine, that presbyteries were bound to receive and accept every qualified preacher, presented by the crown, or others exercising the right of such preferment, and the latter opposing it. The importance of the question lay in the fact that a large number of the places in the Church were in the gift of the crown, and many others in the hands of lay-patrons, and these were frequently bestowed in such a manner as to accumulate two or more benefices in the hands of one person. The great point made by Chalmers was, that one church, one congregation, however small, was enough to occupy and absorb the attention of one minister; and that a plurality of benefices was both corrupting



to the Church, by making it subservient to patronage, and destructive of the apostolic spirit, which demands the devotion of the whole soul to the work of the ministry.

I had the good fortune to hear Chalmers speak for a few moments, but with great energy and power, so as to give me an idea of his appearance and manner. He was a large man, and as he rose he seemed rather heavy, slow, and awkward. His face was large, its outline being nearly circular. His lips, when closed, were thin, giving a certain sharpness and firmness to his countenance. His forehead was large and expansive, his brow finely arched, his eye gray, and its expression ordinarily heavy. Altogether his appearance, as he first rose to my view, was unpromising. His speech, his articulation, was even worse, at the outset, for he had the Fifeshire dialect—the harshest and most unintelligible in Scotland. He had, however, spoken but a few sentences, when the whole man was transformed. That heaviness which marked his appearance, had wholly passed away. Upon his countenance there was an animated yet lofty expression—firm and fearless, benevolent and winning—while his voice, pouring out a vast flow of thought, had in it a tone at once of love and command, of feeling and of authority, absolutely irresistible. I felt myself borne along in the torrent—compelled, yet lending myself gratefully to the movement. Sentence after sentence fell from his lips, thought accumulated upon thought,

illustration upon illustration, and yet the listener compassed every conception and treasured every word. There was something in his voice so musical, so touching, that the whole sank into the soul like a hymn. The general effect was aided by his gestures and movements, for though by no means graceful, they harmonized so well with the emotions of the speaker as at once to illustrate and enforce the general tenor of his address.

On another occasion I heard Dr. Chalmers preach, in one of the churches of the city. The crowd was so great, however, that I saw and heard very imperfectly. It seemed to me that he was rather calculated to produce an effect by his oratory, than his writings. He had evidently wonderful powers of amplification : he often started topics apparently barren and unsuggestive, but soon he called around them a crowd of thoughts and associations of the highest interest. The common labors of the minister of the Gospel—entering into the hearts and homes of the rich and the poor ; now leading to the stately hall, and now to the squalid dens of vice, poverty, and crime ; now to the administration of baptism, and now to the sacrament—this hackneyed routine, by force of his vivid imagination and ardent spirit, presented pictures to the mind and awoke emotions in the heart, quite overwhelming. He seemed, indeed, like a magician, capable of converting even the sand and stones of the desert into images of life and power ; but it appeared

to me that in order to do this, the voice and gesture and presence of the sorcerer, were indispensable. I have never, in reading any thing he has written—noble as are his works—at all realized the emotions produced by the brief, but startling speech I heard from him in the Assembly.

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## LETTER XLII.

*A Dinner at Lockhart's—Conversation about Byron—Mrs. Lockhart—Irving—Professor Ticknor—Music—The Pibroch and Miss Edgeworth—Anecdotes of the Indians—Southey and Second Sight—Cooper's Pioneers—The Pilot—Paul Jones—Brockden Brown—Burns—Tricks of the Press—Charles Scott—The Welsh Parson—The Italian Base-viol Player—Personal Appearance of Sir Walter—Departure for London—Again in Edinburgh in 1832—Last Moments of Sir Walter—The Sympathy of Nature.*

MY DEAR C\*\*\*\*\*

I hope you fully comprehend that, in these sketches I am only dipping into my journal here and there, and selecting such memoranda as I think may amuse you. Most of these passages refer to individuals who have now passed to their graves. It is mournful—to me it is suggestive of feelings inexpressibly sad and solemn—to reflect that of the long list of distinguished persons who, at the period I refer to, shed a peculiar glory upon Edinburgh, not one survives. Scott, Lockhart, Jeffrey, Chalmers—these, and others who stood beside them, either shar-

ing or reflecting the blushing honors of genius and fame, falling around them—all are gone from the high places which they then illumined with their presence. I am speaking only of the dead—yet I remember them as living, and—though their history, their works, their fame, are familiar to you—it may still interest you to go back and participate in recollections of them—their persons, speech, manner—and thus, in some degree, see them as they were seen, and know them as they were known. I pray you to accept these passages from my journal, as glimpses only of what I saw, and not as pretending at all to a regular account of my travels and observations, at the time referred to.

On Wednesday, June 2, I dined with Mr. Lockhart—25 Northumberland-street. Besides the host and hostess, there were present Sir Walter Scott, his son, Charles Scott, Mr. Blackwood, Mr. Robinson, and three or four other persons. At dinner I sat next Sir Walter—an arrangement made, I believe, in compliment to myself. Every thing went off pleasantly—with the usual ease, hospitality, and heartiness of an English dinner. The house and furniture were plain and handsome—such as were common to people of good condition and good taste.

The meal was discussed with the usual relish, and with the usual garnish of wit and pleasantry. After the ladies had retired, the conversation became general and animated. Byron was the engrossing topic.

Sir Walter spoke of him with the deepest feeling of admiration and regret. A few weeks before, on the receipt of the news of his death, he had written an obituary notice of him, in which he compared him to the sun, withdrawn from the heavens at the very moment when every telescope was leveled to discover either his glory or his spots. He expressed the opinion that Byron was "dying of home-sickness"—that being his phrase. For a long time he had flouted England, and seemed to glory alike in his exile and his shame. Yet all this time his heart was devoured with "the fiend ennui." He went to Greece, in the hope of doing some gallant deed that would wipe out his disgrace, and create for him such sympathy in the breasts of his countrymen, as would enable him to return—his "faults forgiven and his sins forgot."

Lockhart and Blackwood both told stories, and we passed a pleasant half hour. The wine was at last rather low, and our host ordered the servant to bring more. Upon which Scott said—"No, no, Lokert"—such was his pronunciation of his son-in-law's name—"we have had enough : let us go and see the ladies." And so we gathered to the parlor.

Mrs. Lockhart was now apparently about two and twenty years old—small in person, and girl-like in manner. Her hair was light-brown, cut short, and curled in her neck and around her face. Her cheeks were blooming, and her countenance full of cheerfulness. Her address was at once graceful and gracious

—indicating a lively, appreciative nature and the finest breeding. She had a son, four years old, and at my request, he was brought in. He was a fine boy, “very like his father,” but alas, doomed to an early death.\*

Mrs. Lockhart spoke with great interest of Mr. Irving, who had visited the family at Abbotsford. She said that he slept in a room which looked out on the Tweed. In the morning as he came down to breakfast, he was very pale, and being asked the reason, confessed that he had not been able to sleep. The sight of the Tweed from his window, and the consciousness of being at Abbotsford, so filled his imagination—so excited his feelings, as to deprive him of slumber. She also spoke of Professor Ticknor—laying the accent on the last syllable—as having been at Abbotsford, and leaving behind him the most agreeable impressions.

Our lively hostess was requested to give us some music, and instantly complied—the harp being her instrument. She sang Scotch airs, and played several pibrochs—all with taste and feeling. Her range of tunes seemed inexhaustible. Her father sat by, and entered heartily into the performances. He beat time vigorously with his lame leg, and frequently helped out a chorus, the heartiness of his tones making up for some delinquencies in tune and time.

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\* He died at London, Dec. 15, 1831; his mother followed him, May 17, 1837.

Often he made remarks upon the songs, and told anecdotes respecting them. When a certain pibroch had been played, he said it reminded him of the first time he ever saw Miss Edgeworth. There had come to Abbotsford, a wild Gaelic peasant from the neighborhood of Staffa, and it was proposed to him to sing a pibroch, common in that region. He had consented, but required the whole party present, to sit in a circle on the floor, while he should sing the song, and perform a certain pantomimic accompaniment, in the center. All was accordingly arranged in the great hall, and the performer had just begun his wild chant, when in walked a small but stately lady, and announced herself as Miss Edgeworth!

Mrs. Lockhart asked me about the American Indians—expressing great curiosity concerning them. I told the story of one who was tempted to go into the rapids of the Niagara river, just above the Falls, for a bottle of rum. This he took with him, and having swam out to the point agreed upon, he turned back and attempted to regain the land. For a long time the result was doubtful: he struggled powerfully, but in vain. Inch by inch, he receded from the shore, and at last, finding his doom sealed, he raised himself above the water, wrenched the cork from the bottle, and putting the latter to his lips, yielded to the current, and thus went down to his doom.

Mrs. Lockhart made some exclamations of mingled admiration and horror. Sir Walter then said that he



had read an account of an Indian, who was in a boat, approaching a cataract; by some accident, it was drawn into the current, and the savage saw that his escape was impossible. Upon this he arose, wrapped his robe of skins around him, seated himself erect, and with an air of imperturbable gravity, went over the falls.

"That is sublime," said Mrs. Lockhart: "as if he were preparing to meet the Great Spirit, and he thought it proper to enter his presence with dignity!"

"The most remarkable thing about the American Indians," said Blackwood, "is their being able to follow in the trail of their enemies, by their footprints left in the leaves, upon the grass, and even upon the moss of the rocks. The accounts given of this seem hardly credible."

"I can readily believe it, however," said Sir Walter. "You must remember that this is a part of their education. I have learned at Abbotsford to discriminate between the hoof-marks of all our neighbors' horses, and I taught the same thing to Mrs. Lockhart. It is, after all, not so difficult as you might think. Every horse's foot has some peculiarity—either of size, shoeing, or manner of striking the earth. I was once walking with Southey—a mile or more from home—across the fields. At last we came to a bridle-path, leading toward Abbotsford, and here I noticed fresh hoof-prints. Of this I said nothing; but pausing and looking up with an inspired expression, I

said to Southey—"I have a gift of second sight: we shall have a stranger to dinner!"

"'And what may be his name?' was the reply.

"'Scott,' said I.

"'Ah, it is some relation of yours,' he said; 'you have invited him, and you would pass off as an example of your Scottish gift of prophecy, a matter previously agreed upon!'

"'Not at all,' said I. 'I assure you that till this moment I never thought of such a thing.'

"When we got home, I was told that Mr. Scott, a farmer living some three or four miles distant, and a relative of mine, was waiting to see me. Southey looked astounded. The man remained to dinner, and he was asked if he had given any intimation of his coming. He replied in the negative: that indeed he had no idea of visiting Abbotsford when he left home. After enjoying Southey's wonder for some time, I told him that I saw the tracks of Mr. Scott's horse in the bridle-path, and inferring that he was going to Abbotsford, easily foresaw that we should have him to dinner."

Mrs. Lockhart confirmed her father's statement, and told how, in walking over the country together, they had often amused themselves in studying the hoof-prints along the roads.

Mr. Lockhart returned to the Indians. "I have lately been reading an exceedingly clever American novel, entitled the *Pioneers*, by Cooper. His descrip-

tive power is very great, and I think he has opened a new field of romance, especially in the hunters along the frontiers, who, in their intercourse with savages, have become half savage themselves. That border life is full of incident, adventure, poetry; the character of Leatherstocking is original and striking."

"I have not seen the *Pioneers*," said Scott; "but I have read the *Pilot* by the same author, which has just been published. It is very clever, and I think it will turn out that his strength lies in depicting sea life and adventure. We really have no good sea-tales, and here is a wide field, open to a man of true genius."

"But, papa," said our hostess, "I should think it rather a narrow field. Only a few persons go to sea, and the language of sailors is so technical as to be hardly understood by people generally. It seems to me that sea-tales can never excite the sympathy of the great mass of readers, because they have had no experience of its life and manners."

"It is no doubt a task of some difficulty," said Sir Walter, "to bring these home to the hearts of the reading million; nevertheless, to a man of genius for it, the materials are ample and interesting. All our minds are full of associations of danger, of daring, and adventure with the sea and those who have made that element their home. And besides, this book to which I refer—the *Pilot*—connects its story with the land. It is perhaps more interesting to me,

because I perfectly well recollect the time when Paul Jones—whose character is somewhat reflected in the hero of the story—came up the Solway in 1778 in the *Ranger*, though I was then less than ten years old. He kept the whole coast in a state of alarm for some time, and was in fact the great scarecrow of that age and generation."

"Mr. Cooper is a man of genius," said Lockhart: "no one can deny that; but it seems to me that Brockden Brown was the most remarkable writer of fiction that America has produced. There is a similarity in his style to that of the Radcliffe school, and in the tone of mind to Godwin's Caleb Williams; but in his machinery, he is highly original. In his display of the darker passions, he surpasses all his models."

"That may be true," said Sir Walter, "but it is neither a wholesome nor a popular species of literature. It is almost wholly ideal; it is not in nature; it is in fact contrary to it. Its scenes, incidents, characters, do not represent life: they are alien to common experience. They do not appeal to a wide circle of sympathy in the hearts of mankind. The chief emotion that it excites is terror or wonder. The suggestive manner of treating every subject, aims at keeping the mind constantly on the rack of uncertainty. This trick of art was long ago exhausted. Brown had wonderful powers, as many of his descriptions show; but I think he was led astray by falling under the influence of bad examples, prevalent at his time.

Had he written his own thoughts, he would have been, perhaps, immortal: in writing those of others, his fame was of course ephemeral."

The conversation turned upon Burns. Scott knew him well. He said that Tam O'Shanter was written to please a stonecutter, who had executed a monument for the poet's father, on condition that he should write him a witch-story, in verse. He stated that Burns was accustomed, in his correspondence, more especially with ladies, to write an elaborate letter, and then send a copy of it to several persons—modifying local and personal passages to suit each individual. He said that of some of these letters, he had three or four copies thus addressed to different persons, and all in the poet's handwriting.

The tricks of the London newspapers were spoken of, and he mentioned the following instance. A popular preacher there, had caused a church to be built, in which he was to officiate. The time was fixed for its dedication; but two days before this, an article appeared in one of the city prints, describing the building, and speaking well of it, but suggesting that the pillars which supported the gallery were entirely too slight, and it must be exceedingly dangerous for any congregation to assemble there! This of course produced a general alarm, and to appease this, the proprietor found it necessary to have a survey made by an architect. This was done, and the architect declared, that, as the pillars were of iron,

there was not the slightest danger. The proprietor took this statement to the editor of the paper, and begged him to retract his false and injurious statement. The reply was—

“This is doubtless an important matter to you, but not of the slightest interest to me.”

“But, sir,” was the reply, “you have stated what is not true: will you not correct your own error?”

“Yes, but we must be paid for it.”

“What, for telling the truth?”

“That depends upon circumstances: do you suppose we can tell every truth that everybody desires us to? No, sir; this is a matter of interest to you: you can afford to pay for it. Give us ten guineas, and we will set it all right.”

The proprietor of the church had no other resource, and so he paid the money.

Charles Scott, Sir Walter's second son, a rosy-checked youth of about eighteen, was present. He had recently come from Wales, where he had been under the teaching of a Welch clergyman. This subject being mentioned, Blackwood asked Mr. Robinson—a very sober, clerical-looking gentleman—to give the company a sample of a Welch sermon. Two chairs were placed back to back: Blackwood sat in one—his bald, flat pate for a desk, and the performer mounted the other—taking one of Mrs. Lockhart's songs for his notes. It seems he was familiar with the Welch language, and an admirable mimic. His performance was



exceedingly amusing. When he became animated, he slapped the music down on Blackwood's bald pate, and in capping his climaxes, gave it two or three smart thumps with his fist. Blackwood must have had a substantial skull, or he could not have borne it. At last, even he had enough of it, and when he perceived another climax was coming, he dodged, and the sermon was speedily brought to a close.

Mr. Robinson was then called upon to imitate an Italian player on the bass-viol. He took a pair of tongs for his bow, and a shovel for the viol, and mounting a pair of spectacles on the tip-end of his nose, he began imitating the spluttering of the instrument by his voice. It was inimitably droll. Sir Walter was quite convulsed, and several of the ladies absolutely screamed. As to myself, I had the side-ache for four-and-twenty hours.

And thus passed the evening—till twelve o'clock. I have not told you the half of what is indicated in the notes before me. These specimens will suffice, however, to give you some idea of the manner in which good people unbent in the family circle of Edinburgh, thirty years ago. You will readily suppose that my eye often turned upon the chief figure in this interesting group. I could not for a moment forget his presence, though nothing could be more unpretending and modest than his whole air and bearing.

His features are doubtless impressed upon you by his portraits, for they have all a general resemblance.



There was in Mr. Lockhart's parlor, where we were sitting, a copy of Chantry's bust of him—since repeated a thousand times in plaster. I compared it again and again with the original. Nothing could possibly be better as a likeness. The lofty head, the projecting brows, the keen, peering glance of the eye, the long, thick upper lip, the dumpy nose, the rather small and receding chin—each feature separately homely, yet all combined to form a face of agreeable expression. Its general effect was that of calm dignity; and now, in the presence of children and friends, lighted by genial emotions, it was one of the pleasantest countenances I have ever seen. When standing or walking, his manly form, added to an aspect of benevolence, completed the image—at once exciting affection and commanding respect.

As to his manners, I need only add that they were those of a well-bred English gentleman—quiet, unpretending, absolutely without self-assertion. He appeared to be happy, and desirous of making others so. He was the only person present, who seemed unconscious that he was the author of *Waverley*. His intercourse with his daughter, and hers in return, were most charming. She called him "papa," and he called her "my child," "my daughter," "Sophia," and in the most endearing tone and manner. She seemed quite devoted to him, watching his lips when he was speaking, and seeking in every thing to anticipate and fulfill his wishes. When she was singing,

his eye dwelt upon her, his ear catching and seeming to relish every tone. Frequently, when she was silent, his eye rested upon her, and the lines came to my mind—

“Some feelings are to mortals given,  
With less of earth in them, than Heaven:  
And if there be a human tear  
From passion’s dross refined and clear,  
A tear so limpid and so meek  
It would not stain an angel’s cheek—  
’Tis that which pious fathers shed  
Upon a duteous daughter’s head!”

After a stay of about three weeks in Edinburgh, I took a reluctant leave of it, and went to London. Eight years later, September, 1832, I was again there. Scott was on his death-bed, at Abbotsford. Overburdened with the struggle to extricate himself from the wreck of his fortunes, his brain had given way, and the mighty intellect was in ruins. On the morning of the 17th, he woke from a paralytic slumber—his eye clear and calm, every trace of delirium having passed away. Lockhart came to his bedside. “My dear,” he said, “I may have but a moment to speak to you. Be a good man; be virtuous—be religious: be a good man. Nothing else will give you any comfort, when you are called upon to lie here!”

Oh, what a bequest were these words, uttered by the dying lips of the mightiest genius of the age! We may all do well to heed them. Few more words did he speak; he soon fell into a stupor, which, on

the 21st, became the sleep of death. Thus he expired, all his children around him. "It was a beautiful day," says his biographer—"so warm that every window was wide open, and so perfectly still that the sound of all others most delicious to his ear, the gentle ripple of the Tweed over its pebbles, was distinctly audible as we knelt around the bed, and his eldest son kissed and closed his eyes!"

The signs and symbols of mourning that spread over Great Britain on account of the death of the great and good man, were like those which commemorate the decease of a sovereign. Bells were tolled, sermons were preached, flags of ships were at half-mast, nearly every newspaper was clothed in black. In Edinburgh, every lip trembled in speaking of the melancholy event.

Two days after this, I departed with my companion for the Highlands. On reaching Stirling, we found it enveloped in the drapery of dark, impenetrable clouds. We passed on to Callender; we proceeded to Loch Katrine. All around seemed to be in mourning. Huge masses of dim vapor rolled around the pinnacle of Benain; the shaggy brows and rocky precipices of Benvenue were all shrouded in gloomy mist. The hoary forests of the Trosachs heaved sad and moaning in the breeze. The surface of the lake was wrinkled with falling spray. All around seemed to wail and weep, as if some calamity had fallen upon nature itself. He who had endowed these scenes with

immortality, was dead; his body was now being borne to its tomb. While a nation wept, it was meet that the mountain and the lake, the stream and the glen—which his genius had consecrated—should also weep.

“Call it not vain; they do not err  
 Who say, that when the poet dies,  
 Mute nature mourns her worshiper,  
 And celebrates his obsequies;  
 Who say, tall cliff and cavern lone,  
 For the departed bard make moan;  
 That mountains weep in crystal rill;  
 That flowers in tears of balm distill;  
 Through his loved groves that breezes sigh,  
 And oaks, in deeper groans, reply;  
 And rivers teach their rushing wave  
 To murmur dirges round his grave!”

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## LETTER XLIII.

*Journey to London—Remarks on England, as it appears to the American Traveler—The Climate—The Landscape—Jealousies between the English and Americans—Plan for securing Peace.*

MY DEAR C\*\*\*\*\*

Early in June, I set out for London. My route led me through the village of Dalkeith, and the possessions of the Duke of Buccleugh, extending for thirty miles on both sides of the road. We were constantly meeting objects which revived historical or poetic reminiscences. Among these was Cockpen,

the scene of the celebrated ballad, and as I rode by, the whole romance passed before my mind. I fancied that I could even trace the pathway along which the old laird proceeded upon his courtship, as well as the residence of

“The pennyless lass with a lang pedigree;”

and who was so daft as to reject his offer, although

“His wig was well powthered and as gude as new;

His waistcoat was red, and his coat it was blue,

A ring on his finger, his sword and cocked hat—

And who could refuse the auld laird wi’ a’ that?”

We crossed the Galawater and the Ettrick, and traveled along the banks of the Tweed—formed by the union of these two streams. We passed Abbotsford, rising at a little distance on the left—its baronial dignity being lost in the spell of more potent associations. Further on, we saw the Eildon Hills, “cleft in three” by the wondrous wizzard, Michael Scott—as duly chronicled in the Lay of the Last Minstrel. We proceeded along the banks of the Teviot—a small limpid stream, where we observed the barefooted lassies washing, as in the days of Allan Ramsay. We saw Netherby Hall, and a little beyond Cannobie Lea, the scenes of the song of Young Lochinvar. All these, and many more localities of legendary name and fame, were passed in the course of a forenoon’s progress in the stage-coach. Scotland is indeed a charmed land!

One day's journey brought me to Carlisle: thence I traveled westward, looking with all due delight upon Wendermere, and Rydal, and Grassmere, and Helvellyn, and Derwentwater, and Skiddau. Then turning eastward, I traveled over a hilly and picturesque country, to the ancient and renowned city of York. Having lingered, half entranced amid its antiquities, and looked almost with worship upon its cathedral—the most beautiful I have ever seen—I departed, and soon found myself once more in London.

As I shall not return to the subject again, allow me to say a few words as to the impression England makes upon the mind of an American, traveling over its surface. I have visited this country several times within the last thirty years, and I shall group my impressions in one general view. The whole may be summed up in a single sentence, which is, that England is incomparably the most beautiful country in the world! I do not speak of it in winter, when incumbered with fogs; when there is

“No sun, no moon, no morn, no noon,  
No dusk, no dawn—no proper time of day;  
No sky, no earthly view, no distance looking blue.  
No road, no street, no t’other side the way!”

I take her as I do any other beauty who sits for her portrait—in her best attire; that is, in summer. The sun rises here as high in June, as it does in America. Vegetation is just about as far advanced. The meadows, the wheat-fields, the orchards, the forests, are in

their glory. There is one difference, however, between the two countries—the sun in England is not so hot, the air is not so highly perfumed, the buzz of the insects is not so intense. Every thing is more tranquil. With us, all nature, during summer, appears to be in haste, as if its time was short—as if it feared the coming frost. In England, on the contrary, there seems to be a confidence in the seasons, as if there were time for the ripening harvests; as if the wheat might swell out its fat sides, the hops amplify its many-plaited flowers, the oats multiply and increase its tassels—each and all attaining their perfection at leisure. In the United States, the period of growth of most vegetables is compressed into ten weeks; in Great Britain, it extends to sixteen.

If we select the middle of June as a point of comparison, we shall see that in America there is a spirit, vigor, energy in the climate, as indicated by vegetable and animal life, unknown in Europe. In the former, the pulse of existence beats quicker than in the latter. The air is clearer, the landscape is more distinct, the bloom more vivid, the odors more pungent, the perceptions of the mind even, I doubt not, are more intense. A clover-field in America, in full bloom, is by many shades more ruddy than the same thing in England—its breath even is sweeter: the music of the bees stealing its honey is of a higher key. A summer forest with us is of a livelier green than in any part of Great Britain; the incense



breathed upon the heart, morning and evening, is, I think, more full and fragrant. And yet, if we take the summer through, this season is pleasanter in England than with us. It is longer, its excitements are more tranquil, and, being spread over a larger space, the heart has more leisure to appreciate them, than in the haste and hurry of our American climate.

There is one fact worthy of notice, which illustrates this peculiarity of the English summer. The trees there are all of a more sturdy, or, as we say, *stubb'd* form and character. The oaks, the elms, the walnuts, beeches, are shorter and thicker, as well in the trunks as the branches, than ours. They have all a stocky, John Bull form and stature. The leaves are thicker, the twigs larger in circumference. I have noticed particularly the recent growths of apple-trees, and they are at once shorter and stouter than in America. This quality in the trees gives a peculiarity to the landscape. The forest is more solid and less graceful than ours. If you will look at an English painting of trees, you notice the fact I state, and perceive the effect it gives, especially to scenes of which trees constitute a prevailing element. All over Europe, in fact, the leaves of the trees have a less feathery appearance than in America; and in general the forms of the branches are less arching, and, of course, less beautiful. Hence it will be perceived that European pictures of trees differ in this respect from American ones—the foliage in the for-

mer being more solid, and the sweep of the branches more angular.

But it is in respect to the effects of human art and industry, that the English landscape has the chief advantage over ours. England is an old country, and shows on its face the transforming influences of fifteen centuries of cultivation. It is, with the exception of Belgium, the most thickly-settled country of Europe—nearly three hundred and fifty inhabitants to the square mile, while in the United States we have but seven. Massachusetts, the most thickly-settled State in America, has but one hundred and thirty.

England, therefore, is under a garden-like cultivation; the plowing is straight and even, as if regulated by machinery; the boundaries of estates consist for the most part of stone mason-work, the intermediate divisions being hedges, neatly trimmed, and forming a beautiful contrast to our stiff stone walls and rail fences. The public roads are nicely wrought, the sides being turfed with neat and convenient footways. The railway stations are beautiful specimens of architecture; the sides of the railways are all sodded over, and often are blooming with patches of cultivated flowers. In looking from the top of a hill over a large extent of country, it is impossible not to feel a glow of delight at the splendor of the scene—the richness of the soil, its careful and skillful cultivation, its green, tidy boundaries checkering the

scene, its teeming crops, its fat herds, its numberless and full-fleeced sheep.

Nor must the dwellings be overlooked. I pass by the cities and the manufacturing villages, which, in most parts, are visible in every extended landscape—sometimes, as in the region of Manchester, spreading out for miles, and sending up pitchy wreaths of smoke from a thousand tall, tapering chimneys. I am speaking now of the country, and here are such residences as are unknown to us. An English castle would swallow up a dozen of our shingle or brick villas. The adjacent estate often includes a thousand acres—and these, be it remembered, are kept almost as much for ornament as use. Think of a dwelling that might gratify the pride of a prince, surrounded by several square miles of wooded park, and shaven lawn, and winding stream, and swelling hill, and all having been for a hundred, perhaps five hundred years, subjected to every improvement which the highest art could suggest! There is certainly a union of unrivaled beauty and magnificence in the lordly estates of England. We have nothing in America which at all resembles them.

And then there is every grade of imitation of these high examples, scattered over the whole country. The greater part of the surface of England belongs to wealthy proprietors, and these have alike the desire and the ability to give an aspect of neatness, finish, and elegance, not only to their dwellings and the

immediate grounds, but to their entire estates. The prevailing standard of taste thus leads to a universal beautifying of the surface of the country. Even the cottager feels the influence of this omnipresent spirit; the brown thatch over his dwelling, and the hedge before his door, must be neatly trimmed; the green ivy must clamber up and festoon his windows, and the little yard in front must bloom with roses and lilies, and other gentle flowers, in their season.

And thus cold, foggy England is made the paradise of the earth—at least during this charming month of June. Nature now, in compensation for her ill humor at other seasons, aids in this universal decoration. Through the whole summer—nay, in autumn, and even in winter—the verdure of the English landscape is preserved. Not in July nor August, not even in December, do we here see the grass parched with heat or grown gray in the frost. It is true the leaves of the trees fall, as they do with us, in November—not having first clothed the hills in red and purple and gold as in America, but, as the English poet tells us—

“—— the fading, many-colored woods,  
Shade deep'ning over shade, the country round  
Imbrown; a crowded umbrage, dusk and dun,  
Of every hue, from wan, declining green,  
To sooty dark”—

thus, for a time, seeming to prelude the coming winter, with a drapery of mourning woven of the faded

glories of summer. Nothing can indeed be more dismal than the aspect of England, when the black, crumpled leaves are falling in the forests—some yet fluttering on the branches, and others strewn on the ground. But even then the sod retains its living hue, and when at last the leaves have fallen, there is still a universal mantle of verdure over the fields—thus redeeming winter from a portion of its gloom.

So much for the common aspect of England as the traveler passes over it. The seeker for the picturesque may find abundant gratification in Devonshire, Derbyshire, Westmoreland, though Wales and Scotland, and parts of Ireland, are still more renowned for scenic beauty. So far as combinations of nature are concerned, nothing in the world can surpass some of our own scenery—as along the upper waters of the Housatonic and the Connecticut, or among the islands of Lake George, and a thousand other places—but these lack the embellishments of art and the associations of romance or song, which belong to the rival beauties of British landscapes.

You will notice that I confine these remarks to a single topic—the aspect of England, as it meets the eye of an American traveler. The English, with all their egotism, do not appreciate that wonderful display of wealth and refinement, which the surface of their country presents. They do not and can not enjoy the spectacle as an American does, for they are born to it, and have no experience which teaches

them to estimate it by common and inferior standards. Having said so much on this subject, I shall not venture to speak of English society—of the lights and shadows of life beneath the myriad roofs of towns and cities. The subject would be too extensive, and besides, it has been abundantly treated by others. I only say, in passing, that the English people are best studied at home. John Bull, out of his own house, is generally a rough customer: here, by his fireside, with wife, children, and friends, he is generous, genial, gentlemanly. There is no hospitality like that of an Englishman, when you have crossed his threshold. Everywhere else he will annoy you. He will poke his elbow into your sides in a crowded thoroughfare; he will rebuff you if, sitting at his side in a locomotive, you ask a question by way of provoking a little conversation; he will get the advantage of you in trade, if he can; he carries at his back a load of prejudices, like that of Christian in Pilgrim's Progress, and instead of seeking to get rid of them, he is always striving to increase his collection. If he becomes a diplomat, his great business is to meddle in everybody's affairs; if an editor, he is only happy in proportion as he can say annoying and irritating things. And yet, catch this same John Bull at home, and his crusty, crocodile armor falls off, and he is the very best fellow in the world—liberal, hearty, sincere—the perfection of a gentleman.

The relations of America to England are a subject



of great interest to both countries. It would seem that by every dictate of prudence, as well as of propriety, they should remain friends. We are of the same kith and kin, have the same language, the same faith, the same moral and social platform, the same, or at least similar institutions. All these ties seem to bind us in the bonds of peace and amity. To this may be added the myriad relations of commercial interest. To do good to each other is virtually to earn and bless our daily bread. And yet we have been twice at war. There is a social war always being waged between us. The presses of England and America seem to conceive that they say their best things when they say their worst, of the two countries. We must not, then, put too much faith in consanguinity. Family quarrels are proverbially the fiercest. It is a mournful truth that the first murder was a fratricide.

What then is to be done? One thing could and should be done, in England. The press there is in the hands of the ruling people. If, as is asserted in England, there is a general feeling of good-will there toward America, that should be made manifest by the common vehicles of public opinion. Certainly this has never yet been done. From the very beginning, the British press has been supercilious, hypercritical, condemnatory of our country, its manners, principles, institutions. Is it possible—so long as this state of things shall continue—for the American people to believe that the English nation do



not, in their hearts, cherish hostility toward this country?

It may, indeed, be said that the American press is as little conciliatory toward England as that of England toward America. But, certainly, the good example should come from them. They are the older people—the mother country: their journals are more immediately within the control and influence of leading minds and influential men, than ours. And besides, all that is wanted on our part, to a good understanding, is an assurance, a conviction of good-will, toward us on the other side of the water. Amid all our scolding at England, there is at the bottom of the American heart, a profound respect for her. We care very little what the French, or Dutch, or Germans, or Russians, or Chinese, or Japanese, say or think of us; but if the English say any thing bad of us, we are sure to resent it. Why can not something be done to bring this mischievous war to an end?

And yet how can it be effected? Let me venture upon a suggestion: if the London Times—that mighty personification of John Bull—would always be a gentleman, when he speaks of America, such would be the influence of this high example, that I should have some hope of seeing, even in my lifetime, a millennial spirit in the intercourse of the two countries.

## LETTER XLIV.

*London Thirty Years Ago—Its Great Increase—George IV.—Ascot Races—The Duke of Wellington—Jacob Perkins and the Steam-gun—The Duke of Sussex—Duke of York—Hounslow Heath—Parliament—Canning—Mackintosh—Brougham—Palmerston—House of Lords—Lord Eldon—Rhio Rhio—Catulani—Signorina Garcia—Edward Irving—Byron's Coffin.*

MY DEAR C\*\*\*\*\*

It is said that Mr. Webster remarked, while in London, that his constant and predominant feeling was that of wonder at its enormous extent: fourteen thousand streets, two hundred thousand houses, fifteen hundred places of public worship, three millions of human beings—all crowded within the space of seven miles square!

Yet London, when I first knew it, was not what it is now. Its population has at least doubled since 1824. At that time Charing Cross was a filthy, triangular thoroughfare, a stand for hackney-coaches, a grand panorama of showbills pasted over the surrounding walls, with the king's mews in the immediate vicinity: this whole area is now the site of Trafalgar-Square—one of the most imposing combinations of magnificent architecture and tasteful embellishments in the world. This is an index of other and similar changes that have taken place all over the city. London has been nearly as much improved as New York within the last thirty years. I know a portion of it,

nearly a mile square, now covered with buildings, which consisted of open fields when I first visited the city. At the present day, London not only surpasses in its extent, its wealth, its accumulations of all that belongs to art—the richness of its merchandises, the extent of its commerce, the vastness of its influence—all the cities that now exist, but all that the world has before known. What were Nineveh, or Babylon, or Rome—even if they had an equal population—when their relations were confined to the quarter of a single hemisphere, and their knowledge did not embrace the telescope, the mariner's compass, the steam-engine, nor the telegraph—neither railroads nor the printing-press;—what were they in comparison with the metropolis of a kingdom, whose colonies now belt the world, and whose influence, reaching every state and nation under the sun, extends to the thousand millions of mankind!

But what of London in 1824? King George IV. was then on the throne, and though he was shy of showing himself in public, I chanced to see him several times, and once to advantage—at Ascot Races. This was a royal course, and brought together an immense crowd of the nobility and gentry, as well as an abundant gathering of gamblers and blacklegs. For more than an hour his majesty stood in the pavilion, surrounded by the Duke of Wellington, the Duke of York, the Marquis of Anglesea, and other persons of note. He was a large, over-fat man, of

a rather sour and discontented countenance. All the arts of the toilet could not disguise the wrinkles of age, and the marks of dissipation and dilapidation. His lips were sharp, his eye grayish-blue, his wig chestnut-brown. His cheeks hung down pendulously, and his whole face seemed pallid, bloated, and flabby. His coat was a blue surtout, buttoned tight over the breast; his cravat, a huge black stock, scarcely sufficient to conceal his enormous, undulating jowl. On his left breast was a glittering star. He wore a common hat, the brim a little broader than the fashion. But for the star and the respect paid to him, he might have passed as only an overdressed and rather sour old rake. I noticed that his coat set very close and smooth, and was told that he was trussed and braced by stays, to keep his flesh in place and shape. It was said to be the labor of at least two hours to prepare him for a public exhibition, like the present. He was a dandy to the last. The wrinkles of his coat, after it was on, were cut out by the tailor, and carefully drawn up with the needle. He had the gout, and walked badly. I imagine there were few among the thousands gathered to the spectacle, who were really less happy than his majesty—the monarch of the three kingdoms.

I not only saw the Duke of Wellington on this, but on many subsequent occasions. I think the portraits give a false idea of his personal appearance. He was really a rather small, thin, insignificant look-

ing man, unless you saw him on horseback. His profile was indeed fine, on account of his high Roman nose, but his front face was meager, and the expression cold, almost mean. His legs were too short, a defect which disappeared when he was in the saddle. He then seemed rather stately, and in a military dress, riding always with inimitable ease, he sustained the image of the great general. At other times, I never could discover in his appearance any thing but the features and aspect of an ordinary, and certainly not prepossessing, old man. I say this with great respect for his character, which, as a personification of solid sense, indomitable purpose, steady loyalty, and unflinching devotion to a sense of public duty, I conceive to be one of the finest in British history.

At this period, our countryman, Jacob Perkins, was astonishing London with his steam-gun. He was certainly a man of extraordinary genius, and was the originator of numerous useful inventions. At the time of which I write, he fancied that he had discovered a new mode of generating steam, by which he was not only to save a vast amount of fuel, but to obtain a marvelous increase of power. So confident was he of success, that he told me he felt certain of being able, in a few months, to go from London to Liverpool, with the steam produced by a gallon of oil. Such was his fertility of invention, that while pursuing one discovery, others came into his mind,

and, seizing upon his attention, kept him in a whirl of experiments, in which many things were begun and comparatively nothing completed.

Though the steam-gun never reached any practical result, it was for some time the admiration of London. I was present at an exhibition of its wonderful performances in the presence of the Duke of Sussex, the king's youngest brother, and the Duke of Wellington, with other persons of note. The general purpose of the machine was to discharge bullets by steam, instead of gunpowder, and with great rapidity—at least a hundred a minute. The balls were put in a sort of tunnel, and by working a crank back and forth, they were let into the chamber of the barrel—one by one—and expelled by the steam. The noise of each explosion was like that of a musket, and when the discharges were rapid, there was a ripping uproar, quite shocking to tender nerves. The balls—carried about a hundred feet across the smithy—struck upon an iron target, and were flattened to the thickness of a shilling piece.\*

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\* Jacob Perkins was a native of Newburyport, Mass., born in 1776. He was apprenticed to a goldsmith, and soon was noted for his ingenuity. Before the establishment of a national mint, he was employed, and with success, in making dies for copper coin. At the age of twenty-four, he invented the machine for cutting nails, which had a great effect over the whole world. He next invented a stamp for preventing counterfeit bills, and then a check-plate, which was long adopted by law in Massachusetts. He now discovered a mode of softening steel, by decarbonization, which led to the use of softened steel for engraving. The results of this discovery have been extensive—the bank-note engraving, now brought to such perfection, being one of the most prominent. Steel



The whole performance was indeed quite formidable, and the Duke of Sussex—who was an enormous, red-faced man—seemed greatly excited. I stood close by, and when the bullets flew pretty thick and the discharge came to its climax, I heard him say to the Duke of Wellington, in an under-tone—“Wonderful, wonderful—d——d wonderful; wonderful, wonderful—d——d wonderful; wonderful, wonderful—d——d wonderful!” and so he went on, without variation. It was in fact, save the profanity, a very good commentary upon the performance.

engraving for fine pictures, was another, and this led to the *Souvenirs*—making books the most desirable articles for presents—instead of rings, necklaces, shawls—thus producing not only a new generation of publications, but a revolution in the taste of society. This discovery Mr. Perkins carried to England, and here he remained till his death in 1849. His other inventions are very numerous: among these are the chain-pump, the bathometer, to measure the depth of water, the pleometer, to measure the velocity of ships, together with a multitude of improvements in various devices, from house-stoves to steam-engines.

After I left London, he so far improved his steam-gun, that he sent balls through eleven planks of deal, an inch thick! A report of his experiments in 1825, before a committee, of which the Duke of Wellington was the head, describes the power exerted, as absolutely terrific.

Mr. Perkins's establishment was in Fleet-street, 69, when I was in London. One of the superintendents of this was Mr. Charles Toppan, now so well known in connection with the eminent firm of Toppan, Carpenter & Co. To his intelligence and kindness I was indebted for much of the pleasure and profit of my first visit to London. Here also was Asa Spenceer—originally a watchmaker of New London, and the inventor of the geometric lathe, for copying medals, as well as other ingenious and useful devices. He was a man of true genius—full of goodness, modesty, and eccentricity.

The house of Mr. Perkins, at this period, was a familiar gathering place of Americans in London—his charming daughters giving a sort of American life and grace to all around them. His son, Angier M. Perkins, a gentleman of great talent, worth, and kindliness, continues his father's establishment in London.



Having thus spoken of the Duke of Sussex, I must say a few words of his brother, the Duke of York, whom I had seen, dressed in a green frock-coat and white pantaloons, at Ascot. He was there interested in the race, for he had entered a famous courser by the name of Moses, for one of the prizes. Some person reflected upon him for this, inasmuch, as among other titles, he held that of bishop.\* His ready reply was, that he was devoted to *Moses and the profits*. Despite his disgrace in the Flanders campaign, and his notorious profligacy, both as a gambler and a roué, he was still a favorite among the British people. There was about him a certain native honorableness and goodness of heart, which survived, even in the midst of his debaucheries. English loyalty has the faculty of seeing the small virtues of its princes through the magnifying power of the telescope; their vices are dwindled into comparative insignificance by being observed with the instrument reversed. And besides, the Duke of York was now heir-apparent to the throne, and thus stood next the king himself.

I saw him not only at Ascot, but on other occasions—especially in a review of the first regiment of foot-guards, at Hyde Park, and again at a review of four thousand horse-guards, at Hounslow Heath. The foot-guards were grenadiers, and their

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\* It is a curious item in ecclesiastical history, that the Duke of York was *Bishop of Osnaburgh*, a district in the kingdom of Hanover.

caps were of enormous height. The duke himself wore the same kind of cap, with a red coat of course. Like all his brothers, he was a large man, and of full habit, though not up to the dimensions of the Duke of Sussex. He had a red, John Bull face, without expression, save that of good feeding. The Duke of Wellington, at this time, was among the spectators. He was now in military dress, on a fine chestnut-colored horse. His motions were quick, and frequently seemed to indicate impatience. His general aspect was highly martial. Several ladies as well as gentlemen on horseback, were admitted to the review and within the circle of the sentries stationed to exclude the crowd. I obtained admission for a crown—five shillings, I mean—for I had learned that in England cash is quite as mighty as in America. The privileged group of fair ladies and brave men, gathered upon a grassy knoll, to observe the evolutions of the soldiers, presented an assemblage such as the aristocracy of England alone can furnish. Those who imagine that this is an effeminate generation, should learn that both the men and women, belonging to the British nobility, taken together, are without doubt the finest race in the world. One thing is certain, these ladies could stand fire—for, although the horses leaped and pranced at the discharges of the troops, their fair riders seemed as much at ease as if upon their own feet. Their horsemanship was indeed admirable, and suggested

those habits of exercise and training, to which their full rounded forms and blooming countenances gave ample testimony.

The review at Hounslow Heath, some eight miles from London—and at the present day nearly covered with buildings—comprised seven regiments of cavalry, including the first and second of the horse-guards. The latter were no doubt the finest troops of the kind in the world—all the horses being large and black, and finely groomed. The caparisons were of the most splendid description, and the men picked for the purpose. All the officers were men of rank, or at least of good family.

The performances consisted of various marches and countermarches—sometimes slow and sometimes quick—across the extended plain. The evolutions of the flying-artillery excited universal admiration. When the whole body—about four thousand horse—rushed in a furious gallop over the ground, the clash of arms, the thunder of hoofs, the universal shudder of the earth—all together created more thrilling emotions in the mind than any other military parade I ever beheld. I have seen eighty thousand infantry in the field, but they did not impress my imagination as forcibly as these few regiments of cavalry at Hounslow Heath. One incident gave painful effect to the spectacle. As the whole body were sweeping across the field, a single trooper was pitched from his horse and fell to the ground. A hundred hoofs

passed over him, and trampled him into the sod. On swept the gallant host, as heedless of their fallen companion, as if only a feather had dropped from one of their caps. The conflict of cavalry in real battle, must be the most fearful exhibition which the dread drama of war can furnish. On this occasion both the king and the Duke of York were present, so that it was one of universal interest. About fifty ladies on horseback rode back and forth over the field, on the flanks of the troops, imitating their evolutions.

You have no doubt heard enough of Parliament; but I shall venture to make a few extracts from my note-book respecting it, inasmuch as these present slight sketches of persons of eminence who have now passed from the scene. I have been often at the House of Commons, but I shall now only speak of a debate in July, 1824, upon the petition, I believe, of the city of London, for a recognition of the independence of some of the South American States. Canning was then secretary of foreign affairs, and took the brunt of the battle made upon the ministry. Sir James Mackintosh led, and Brougham followed him on the same side.

I shall not attempt to give you a sketch of the speeches: a mere description of the appearance and manner of the prominent orators will suffice. Sir James—then nearly sixty years old—was a man rather above the ordinary size, and with a fine, philanthropic face. His accent was decidedly Scotch, and his voice shrill and dry. He spoke slowly, often hes

itated, and was entirely destitute of what we call eloquence. There was no easy flow of sentences, no gush of feeling, no apparent attempt to address the heart or the imagination. His speech was a rigid lecture, rather abstract and philosophical, evidently addressed to the stern intellect of stern men. He had a good deal of gesture, and once or twice was boisterous in tone and manner. His matter was logical, and occasionally he illustrated his propositions by historical facts, happily narrated. On the whole, he made the impression upon my mind that he was a very philosophical, but not very practical, statesman.

Brougham, as you know, is one of the ugliest men in the three kingdoms. His nose is long, and the nostrils, slightly retreating, seem to look at you—sometimes to mock you. The mouth is hooked downward at either corner; the brow is rolled in folds, like the hide of a rhinoceros. And yet, strange to say, this odd composition of odd features makes up a face of rather agreeable, and certainly very effective expression. His figure is a little above the common size, and at the time I speak of, was thin and wiry—a characteristic which time has since kindly converted into a moderate degree of portliness. He had abundance of words, as well as ideas. In his speech on the occasion I describe, he piled thought upon thought, laced sentence within sentence, mingled satire and philosophy, fact and argument, history and anecdote, as if he had been a cornucopia, and

was anxious to disburden himself of its abundance. In all this there were several hard hits, and Canning evidently felt them. As he rose to reply, I took careful note of his appearance, for he was then, I imagine, the most conspicuous of the British statesmen. He was a handsome man, with a bald, shining pate, and a figure slightly stooping in the shoulders. His face was round, his eye large and full, his lips a little voluptuous—the whole bearing a lively and refined expression. In other respects his appearance was not remarkable. His voice was musical, and he spoke with more ease and fluency than most other orators of the House of Commons; yet even he hesitated, paused, and repeated his words, not only in the beginning, but sometimes in the very midst of his argument. He, however, riveted the attention of the members, and his keen observations frequently brought out the ejaculation of “hear, hear,” from both sides of the house. Brougham and Mackintosh watched him with vigilant attention, now giving nods of assent, and now signs of disapprobation.

The difference between the manner of speaking in the British Parliament and the American Congress, has frequently been the subject of remark. There is certainly great heaviness, and a kind of habitual hesitation, in nearly all English public speakers, strikingly in contrast to the easy and rapid fluency, so common with us. I have heard not only the famous men just mentioned in the British Parliament,



but Pecl, Palmerston, O'Connell, and others, and all of them would have been considered dull speakers—so far as mere manner is concerned—here in the United States. I could never perceive in any of them an approach to the easy and melodious flow of Everett, the melting earnestness of Clay, or the majestic thunderings of Webster.

On the occasion I am describing, Sir Francis Burdett\*—then a man of notoriety, but now almost wholly forgotten—made a short speech. He was a tall, slender person, with a singularly prominent forehead, the rest of his face being comparatively thin and insignificant. He was rather dandily dressed, and dived from right to left as he was speaking, in a very curious fashion. His voice was small, but penetrating. His attacks upon the ministry were very direct, but he evidently excited no great attention. It

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\* The history of this individual is curious. He was born in 1770—and though the youngest son of a youngest son, by a series of calamitous deaths, he succeeded to the title and estates of his affluent and ancient family. His wealth was increased by his marrying, in 1793, the daughter of Coutts, the banker. In 1802, after a hot contest, he was returned to Parliament for Middlesex, but the House found the election void, and imprisoned the sheriffs. In 1807, while he was disabled by a duel, he was chosen for Westminster, and continued to represent that borough for nearly thirty years. He was of a turbulent disposition, and having quarreled with the House of Commons, resisted the speaker's warrant for his arrest, thus creating an excitement in which several lives were lost. When the sergeant-at-arms went to his house to arrest him, he found him affectedly teaching a young child the Magna Charta! He was for some time imprisoned in the Tower. The general impression is that, while professing democracy, he was a thorough aristocrat, at least in feeling. This opinion was confirmed in 1835, when he totally changed his politics, and vehemently supported the tory side. He died in 1844.



seemed to me astonishing that he should ever have been a popular leader, for his whole appearance was that of the affected and supercilious aristocrat. The populace have very often been made the dupes of men whose hearts were full of despotism, and who, in flattering the masses, only sought the means of gratifying their unprincipled love of power. Every careful observer has seen examples of this hollow and base democracy, and one might easily suspect Sir Francis Burdett to have been one of them.

Of course I visited the House of Lords—paying two shillings and sixpence for admittance. The bishops wore their surplices; a few of the lords had stars upon the breast, but most of them were without any badge whatever. The general aspect of the assembly was eminently grave and dignified. Eldon was the chancellor—a large, heavy, iron-looking man—the personification of bigoted conservatism. He was so opposed to reforms, that he shed tears when the punishment of death was abolished for stealing five shillings in a dwelling-house! When I saw him, his head was covered with the official wig: his face sufficed, however, to satisfy any one that his obstinacy of character was innate.

While I was here, a committee from the House of Commons was announced; they had brought up a message to the Lords. The chancellor, taking the seals in his hands, approached the committee, bowing three times, and they doing the same. Then

they separated, each moving backward, and bowing. To persons used to such a ceremony, this might be sublime; to me, it was ludicrous—and all the more so on account of the ponderous starchiness of the chief performer in the solemn farce. There was a somewhat animated debate while I was present, in which Lords Liverpool, Lauderdale, Harrowby, and Grey participated; yet nothing was said or done by either that would justify particular notice at this late day.

A great event happened in the musical world while I was in London—the appearance of Catalani at the Italian opera, after several years of absence. The play was *Le Nozze di Figaro*. I had never before seen an opera, and could not, even by the enchantments of music, have my habits of thought and my common sense so completely overturned and bewitched, as to see the whole business of life—intrigue, courtship, marriage, cursing, shaving, preaching, praying, loving, hating—done by singing instead of talking, and yet feel that it was all right and proper. It requires both a musical ear and early training, fully to appreciate and feel the opera—which aims at a union of all the arts of rhetoric, poetry, and music, enforced by scenic representations, and the intense enthusiasm of congregated and sympathetic masses. Even when educated to it, the English, as well as the Americans, have too practical a nature and are too much grooved with business habits, to give themselves up to it, as is done in Italy, and in some other parts of the continent.

Madame Catalani was a large, handsome woman, a little masculine, and past forty. She was not only a very clever actress, but was deemed to have every musical merit—volume, compass, clearness of tone, surpassing powers of execution. Her whole style was dramatic, bending even the music to the sentiments of the character and the song. Some of her displays were almost terrific, her voice drowning the whole soul in a flood of passion. I could appreciate, unlettered as I was in the arts of the opera, her amazing powers—though to say the truth, I was quite as much astonished as pleased. Pasta and Garcia—both of whom I afterwards heard—gave me infinitely greater pleasure, chiefly because their voices possessed that melody of tone which excites sympathy in every heart—even the most untutored. Madame Catalani gave the opera a sort of epic grandeur—an almost tragic vehemence of expression; Pasta and Garcia rendered it the interpretation of those soft and tender emotions which haunt the soul, and for the expression of which God seems to have given music to mankind. It was, no doubt, a great thing to hear the greatest cantatrice of the age, but my remembrance of Madame Catalani is that of a prodigy, rather than an enchantress. On the occasion I am describing, she sang, by request, *Rule Britannia*, between the acts, which drew forth immense applause, in which I heartily joined—not that I liked the words, but that I felt the music.

It was about this time that a great attraction was announced at one of the theatres—nothing less than the king and queen of the Sandwich Islands, who had graciously condescended to honor the performance with their presence. They had come to visit England, and pay their homage to George the Fourth; hence the government deemed it necessary to receive them with hospitality, and pay them such attentions as were due to their rank and royal blood. The king's name was Tamehamaha, but he had also the sub-title or surname of Rhio-Rhio—which, being interpreted, meant Dog of Dogs. Canning's wit got the better of his reverence, and so he profanely suggested that, if his majesty was Dog of Dogs, what must the queen be? However, there was an old man about the court who had acquired the title of Poodle, and he was selected as a fit person to attend upon their majesties. They had their lodgings at the Adelphi Hotel, and might be seen at all hours of the day, looking at the puppet-shows in the street with intense delight. Of all the institutions of Great Britain, Punch and Judy evidently made the strongest and most favorable impression upon the royal party.

They were, I believe, received at a private interview by the king at Windsor; every thing calculated to gratify them was done. I saw them at the theatre, dressed in a European costume, with the addition of some barbarous finery. The king was an enormous man—six feet, three or four inches; the queen

was short, but otherwise of ample dimensions. Besides these persons, the party comprised five or six other members of the king's household. They had all large, round, flat faces, of a coarse, though good-humored expression. Their complexion was a ruddy brown, not very unlike that of the American Indians; their general aspect, however, was very different, and entirely destitute of that mysterious, ruminating air which characterizes our children of the forest. They looked with a kind of vacant wonder at the play, evidently not comprehending it; the farce, on the contrary, seemed greatly to delight them. It is sad to relate that this amiable couple never returned to their country; both died in England—victims either to the climate, or the change in their habits of living.\*

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\* The chief whom I have here noticed was Tamehamaha II. His name is now generally spelled Kamehamaha, and his other title is written Liho-Liho. They sailed in the British ship *L'Aigle*, October, 1823, and arrived at Portsmouth, May, 1824. Of the twenty-five thousand dollars shipped in their chests, only ten thousand were found—twelve thousand having been robbed, and three thousand taken for pretended expenses. Kamamalu, the principal queen, and the two or three inferior wives of his majesty, exhibited themselves at first in loose trowsers and velvetene bed-gowns—but ere long their waists, for the first time, were subjected to corsets, and their forms to Parisian fashions. They wore native turbans, which became the rage in high circles. The king was dressed in the English style, with certain embellishments denoting his rank. They generally behaved with propriety, though one of the party seeing a mullet, resembling a species common in the Sandwich Islands, seized it and hurried home, where their majesties devoured it raw, probably finding it the sweetest morsel they had tasted since they left home. In June, 1824, the whole party were attacked by the measles, Manui, the steward, first, and the king next. On the evening of the 8th the queen died, having taken an affectionate leave of her husband. His heart seemed to be broken, and on the 14th he breathed his

One or two items more, and this chapter shall be closed. Among the prominent objects of interest in London at this period was Edward Irving, then preaching at the Caledonian Chapel, Cross-street, Hatton Gardens. He was now in the full flush of his fame, and such was the eagerness to hear him that it was difficult to get admission. People of all ranks, literary men, philosophers, statesmen, noblemen, persons of the highest name and influence, with a full and diversified representation of the fair sex, crowded to his church. I was so fortunate as to get a seat in the pew of a friend, a privilege which I appreciated all the more, when I counted twenty coroneted coaches standing at the door—some of those who came in them, not being able to obtain even an entrance into the building. The interior was crowded to excess; the alleys were full, and even fine ladies seemed happy to get seats upon the pulpit stairway. Persons of the highest title were scattered here and there, and cabinet ministers were squeezed in with the mass of common humanity.

Mr. Irving's appearance was very remarkable. He was over six feet in height, very broad-shouldered, violently cross-eyed, with long black hair hanging in heavy, twisted ringlets down upon his shoulders. His complexion was pallid yet swarthy, the whole

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last. The bodies of the royal pair were taken to their native islands, and there interred with great pomp. The remainder of the party returned to their home, one of them, however, Kapihe, dying on the way, at Valparaiso.



expression of his face—half sinister and half sanctified—creating in the mind of the beholder a painful doubt whether he was a great saint or a great sinner. He wore a black-silk gown, of rich material and ample, graceful folds. His hair was sedulously parted so as to display one corner of his forehead, which a white hand and a very pure linen handkerchief frequently wiped, yet so daintily as not to disturb the love-locks that inclosed it.

There was a strange mixture of saintliness and dandyism, in the whole appearance of this man. His prayer was affected—strange, quaint, peculiar, in its phraseology—yet solemn and striking. His reading of the psalm was peculiar, and a fancy or feeling crossed my mind that I had heard something like it, but certainly not in a church. There was a vague mingling in my imagination of the theatre and the house of worship: of foot-lights, a stage, a gorgeous throng of spectators—an orchestra and a troop of players—and side by side with these—there seemed to come a psalm and a text and a preacher. I was in fact seeking to trace out a resemblance between this strange parson and some star of Drury Lane or Covent Garden. Suddenly I found the clew: Edward Irving in the pulpit was imitating Edmund Kean upon the stage! And he succeeded admirably—his tall and commanding person giving him an immense advantage over the little, insignificant, yet inspired actor. He had the tones of the latter—his gestures, his looks even, as I had often



seen him in Richard the Third and Shylock. He had evidently taken lessons of the renowned tragedian, but whether in public or private, is not for me to say.

The text was Genesis iii. 17, 18. I will extract from my notes, for your entertainment, a rough sketch of the discourse.

“This malediction—‘Cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee: and thou shalt eat the herb of the field’—this was the charter under which man held his existence till the birth of Christ, when the benediction—‘Peace on earth and good-will to man,’ was pronounced. Since that time, these two principles and powers—the malediction and the benediction—have been at strife. To trace some of the consequences of this conflict is our present business.

“Moses discriminates between the two natures of man, by first stating the creation of his body as the completion of one distinct part or portion of his nature, and then the Creator breathing into him a living soul, or more literally the spirit of lives, thus completing the other portion of his being.

“I can not but pause a moment to note the striking coincidence between the statement of Moses and the result of philosophic speculation, which now makes the same discrimination; the study of the structure of the body, or physiology, being one branch of science, and the study of the mind or spi-

rit, called metaphysics, being another. The French school, some time since, blended the whole nature of man in one physical organization, and Helvetius found in the sensibility of the fingers, all the rudiments—the entire foundation—of the moral and intellectual faculties of man. This crept into English philosophy, until the immortal mind was degraded into a mere tool of the body: the crumbling, earthy tenement alone was regarded, while the godlike inhabitant was made its servant and its slave.

“Let us do justice to the truth! The spirit consists of three parts: the understanding, which discourseth of sensible ideas and powers—the basis of what is called knowledge; the reason, which discourseth of insensible objects and insensible ideas, and has relation to principles and abstract science; and conscience, which discourseth of duty, and hath regard to the relations between man and man, and also between man and his Maker.

“Now the proper vocation of the body is to minister to the spirit in this threefold character.

“Yet, I grieve to say it—the conduct of mankind reverses this system: it is the faculties of the spirit, debased from their high mission, which are everywhere made subservient to the body. I am loth to pain and disgust you with pictures in evidence of this, but every speculation should be supported by fact. I beg you therefore to consider the state of things in this city—the Babylon around us. Divest

yourselves of that magic influence which is exercised by the term—*people*; of that morbid fashion of seeing in low vice and humble misery, only matter for mirth and song; of that cruel taste which haunts the dark and dismal courts and lanes and labyrinths of labor, of want and wretchedness, for subjects for the pencil and the stage. Stand all aloof from the sad jollity with which unthinking men survey such scenes. Wrap the mantle of immortality about thee and go forth, and in the scales of eternity, weigh the things thou seest!

“In the gray of the morning, you hear beneath your casement the heavy tread of the laborer plodding to his toil. This gradually increases, till one pervading volume of sound shakes every part of the city. Go forth and study the scene—the producers of this mighty uproar—the wagoner plodding by the side of his heavy wain, the porter staggering beneath his burden, the scavenger picking and prowling among the offal—the hundreds, the thousands, pouring along in a tide, and bent on their various labors. Survey them as they pass, and how fearfully is the heart smitten with the fact that these are reversing the true order of human destiny: not one among them is subjecting the body to the mind—all are subjecting the mind to the body—all are submitting themselves to the Malediction of the outcasts of Eden, as if the Benediction of the gospel had never been pronounced. From the gray dawn to the deep night, these beings,

to whom is offered the bread of immortal life, are occupied with the poor thought of gaining a few crusts to feed the mortal body!

“If we turn to the higher classes, the picture is equally dark, and perhaps even more discouraging. Whatever we may here find of spiritual culture or intellectual tastes, we still see that the cares, the passions, the desires of the body, though they may often be disguised and refined, still master the soul. The being, whose imagination is capable of reaching the stars, and whose power of faith might carry him to the throne of God and the companionship of angels and just men made perfect—those whose ample means raise them above the groveling necessities of life—still cling to this earthly footstool, still think only of the pleasures of this fleeting animal existence. Whatever there may be of soul, in their pursuits, is a subjugation of it to the senses. A subtle epicureanism pervades the whole atmosphere they breathe. Pleasure, ambition, pride, the desire of honor, of wealth, of name, fame—all hopes, all fears—center in the little narrow kingdom of these poor five senses. These which were given only as windows from which the soul might look out upon immortality, are used as doors and avenues by which the soul passes into its prison-house of earthly enjoyments. Thus the gifted, the rich, the exalted, the favorites of fortune—are, after all, forgetful of the bread of life, and while pampering the body with oil and wine, are

starving the soul with shriveled husks and unsatisfying straw.

“How hard, how disheartening is the steep ascent of duty, which calls upon us to contend with a world thus embattled against the truth. And yet, as soldiers of the cross, we may not ground our arms. If we can not do all we would, let us at least accomplish what we may. To-day, I ask you here to join me, not in the impossible, but the possible. If the poor reject the bread of life, it is perhaps not altogether by choice: the heavy sin of Dives, who, being rich and able to choose, preferred a sensual life, is not laid upon their souls—the groveling necessities of Lazarus have subdued them, crushed them, mastered them. It is through ignorance, through peculiar temptations, through the cares and needs of life, that they thus go astray. The mother, uncertain of bread, alike for herself and her offspring—the father, anxious lest he shall not have a shelter for those whom God has given him—how can these think of aught but the immediate pressing cares of the body? How can these slaves of mortality put on immortality? Let Christianity kneel, mourning and penitent, at the throne of grace, and confessing that these things are so, rouse itself, and say they shall be so no longer. I see around me the great, the powerful: let them speak, and the work is done. Let us carry Comfort to the poor, and as that enters one door, the Gospel with its glad tidings, will come in at the other. Each may do something.

None are too high, none too humble, to assist in this glorious work. The rich, the proud, the strong, in the confidence of their strength, may reject even the bread of life; the poor will welcome it. Relieve the famished body from its suffering for the want of daily bread, and the soul, delivered from its humiliation, will ascend to the throne of grace, and God will bless it, and he will bless you also who have ministered to the good work."

This is a mere outline of the discourse, and only gives an idea of its general drift and argument. The phraseology—which was rich, flowing, redundant, and abounding in illustration, and seemed to me carefully modeled after that of Jeremy Taylor—I did not attempt to preserve. In spite of the evident affectation, the solemn dandyism, the dramatic artifices of the performer—for, after all, I could only consider the preacher as an actor—the sermon was very impressive. Some of the pictures presented to the imagination were startling, and once or twice it seemed as if the whole audience was heaving and swelling with intense emotion, like a sea rolling beneath the impulses of a tempest. The power of the thought, aided by the deep, sympathetic voice of the speaker, and still further enforced by his portentous figure and emphatic action, overrode all drawbacks, and carried the whole heart and imagination along upon its rushing tide. Considered as a display of oratorical art, it was certainly equal to any thing I have



ever heard from the pulpit; yet it did not appear to me calculated to have any permanent effect in enforcing Christian truth upon the conscience. The preacher seemed too much a player, and too little an apostle; the afterthought was, that the whole effect was the result of stage trick, and not of sober truth.

The character and career of Edward Irving present a strange series of incongruities. He was born in Scotland in 1792; he became a preacher, and acquired speedy notoriety, as much by his peculiarities as his merits. He attracted the attention of Dr. Chalmers, and through his influence was for a time assistant minister in the parish of St. John's, at Glasgow. From this place he was called to the Caledonian Chapel, where I heard him. His fame continued to increase; and having published a volume of discourses, under the quaint title, "For the Oracles of God, four Orations; for Judgment to come, an Argument in nine Parts"—three large editions of the work were sold in the space of six months. Wherever he preached, crowds of eager listeners flocked to hear him. His eccentricities increased with his fame. He drew out his discourses to an enormous length, and on several occasions protracted the services to four hours! He soon became mystical, and took to studying unfulfilled prophecy, as the true key to the interpretation of the scriptures. From this extravagance, he passed to the doctrine that Christians, by the power of faith, can attain to the working of mira-



cles and speaking with unknown tongues, as in the primitive ages. Such at last were his vagaries, that he was cut off from communion with the Scottish Church; in consequence, he became the founder of a sect which continues to the present time in England, bearing the title of Irvingites. Worn out with anxiety and incessant labors, he died at Glasgow, while on a journey for his health, in 1834, at the early age of forty-two.

The history of this extraordinary man teaches us various important lessons. It shows us that genius, even though it be allied to sincerity, is easily led astray by flattery and personal vanity; that eccentricity naturally ends in extravagance; that fanaticism is not superior to the use of artifice and affectation, even when they invade the pulpit and assume the badge of the preacher of the gospel; in short, that a man of great gifts, if so be he is not controlled by common sense—if he do not conform his conduct to that every-day but safe regulator, called *propriety*—is very apt to become a misguiding and bewildering light to his fellow-men, just in proportion as his abilities may surpass those of other persons. A large observation of mankind has satisfied me that a great man, even though he be a preacher, if he despises the suggestions of good sense, decency, congruity, usually becomes a great curse. Nearly all the religious vagaries which have led the world astray, have originated with individuals of this character. A large portion

of the infidelity of mankind has its origin in the foibles of those who are set up as the great lights of Christianity.

One more event I must notice—the arrival in London of the mortal remains of Lord Byron, and their lying in state previous to interment. His body had been preserved in spirits, and was thus brought from Greece, attended by five persons of his lordship's suite. Having been transferred to the coffin, it was exhibited at the house of Sir Edward Knatchball, No. 20 Great George-street, on Friday and Saturday, the 9th and 10th of July, 1824. It caused a profound sensation, and such were the crowds that rushed to behold the spectacle, that it was necessary to defend the coffin with a stout wooden railing. When I arrived at the place the lid was closed; I was told, however, that the countenance, though the finer lines had collapsed, was so little changed as to be easily recognized by his acquaintances. The general muscular form of the body was perfectly preserved.

The aspect of the scene, even as I witnessed it, was altogether very impressive. The coffin was covered with a pall, enriched by escutcheons wrought in gold. On the top was a lid, set round with black plumes. Upon it were these words—

“GEORGE GORDON NOEL BYRON.

BORN IN LONDON, 22D JANUARY, 1788:

DIED AT MISSOLONGHI, APRIL 19TH, 1824.”

At the head of the coffin was an urn containing the ashes of his brain and heart—this being also covered with a rich pall, wrought with figures in gold. The windows were closed, and the darkened room was feebly illumined by numerous wax-tapers.

And this was all that remained of Byron! What a lesson upon the pride of genius, the vanity of rank, the fatuity of fame—all leveled in the dust, and despite the garnished pall and magnificent coffin, their possessor was bound to pass through the same process of corruption as the body of a common beggar. And the soul—the soul?

Ah, what questions rose in my mind as I stood beside that coffin! Where art thou, Byron? What art thou? I have never seen thee—I have never known thee, face to face: yet hast thou often spoken to me, and in words that can never die! Thou art not dead—that were impossible: speak to me, then! Tell me—for such as thou might break the seal of the grave—what art thou?—where art thou? Whisper in my ear the dread secret of the tomb! Thou art silent—even thou. How fearful, how terrible is that spell which holds lips like thine—Childe Harold, Manfred, Cain—in the bondage of perpetual stillness! This, indeed, is death!

## LETTER XLV.

*Return to America—Removal to Boston—Literary position of Boston—Prominent literary characters—The Press—The Pulpit—the Bar—New York now the literary metropolis—My publication of various works—The Legendary—N. P. Willis—The era of Annuals—The Token—The artists engaged in it—The authors—Its termination.*

MY DEAR C\*\*\*\*\*

Having made a hurried trip to Paris and back to London, I departed for Liverpool, and thence embarked for the United States, arriving there in October, 1824. I remained at Hartford till October, 1826, as already stated, and then removed to Boston, with the intention of publishing original works, and at the same time of trying my hand at authorship—the latter part of my plan, however, known only to myself.

At that time, Boston was notoriously the literary metropolis of the Union—the admitted Athens of America. Edward Everett had established the North American Review,\* and though he had now just left the editorial chair, his spirit dwelt in it, and his fame lingered around it. Rich'd H. Dana, Edw'd T. Channing, Jared Sparks, George Bancroft, and others, were among the rising lights of the literary horizon. The

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\* The North American was founded in 1815, by William Tudor, who had previously been one of the principal supporters of the Monthly Anthology. Mr. Everett, however, may be said to have given permanency to the publication by his masterly administration of the editorial department.

newspaper press presented the witty and caustic *Galaxy*, edited by Buckingham; the dignified and scholarly *Daily Advertiser*, conducted by Nathan Hale;\* and the frank, sensible, manly *Centinel*, under the editorial patriarch—Benjamin Russell. Channing was in the pulpit and Webster at the forum. Society was strongly impressed with literary tastes; genius was respected and cherished: a man, in those days, who had achieved a literary fame, was at least equal to a president of a bank, or a treasurer of a manufacturing company. The pulpit shone bright and far, with the light of scholarship radiated from the names of Beecher, Greenwood, Pierpont, Lowell, Palfry, Doane, Stone, Frothingham, Gannett: the bar also reflected the glory of letters through H. G. Otis, Charles Jackson, William Prescott, Benjamin Gorham, Willard Philips, James T. Austin, among the older members, and Charles G. Loring, Charles P. Curtis, Richard Fletcher, Theophilus Parsons, Franklin Dexter, J. Quincy, jr., Edward G. Loring, Benj. R. Curtis, among the younger. The day had not yet come when it was glory enough for a college professor to marry a hundred thousand dollars of stocks, or when it was the chief end of a lawyer to become

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\* The *Boston Daily Advertiser* was founded in March, 1814, and Mr. Hale began his editorial career with it. It may be taken as the model of the highest class of newspapers in the United States—able, calm, sincere, wise, and gentlemanly. It would be difficult to name a single journal in any country which, in a union of these qualities, takes rank above it. In the United States there are some which emulate it, but few, if any, which surpass it.

the attorney of an insurance company, or a bank, or a manufacturing corporation. Corporations, without souls, had not yet become the masters and moulders of the soul of society. Books with a Boston imprint had a prestige equal to a certificate of good paper, good print, good binding, and good matter. And while such was the state of things at Boston, how was it at New York? Why, all this time the Harpers, who till recently had been mere printers in Dover-street, had scarcely entered upon their career as publishers,\* and the Appletons,† Putnam, Derby, the Masons, and other shining lights in the trade of New York at the present time, were either unborn, or in the nursery, or at school.

What a revolution do these simple items suggest—wrought in the space of thirty years! The scepter has departed from Judah: New York is now the

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\* James Harper, the eldest of the four brothers now associated in the concern, served his time as apprentice to the trade of printing to Abm. Paul, of New York; he and his brother John commenced as printers in Dover-street, 1817; in 1818, having removed to Fulton-street, they printed and published Locke's *Essays*, which was their first enterprise as publishers. For a long time their publications were almost exclusively foreign books: at the present time, three-fourths are American works. Their *Magazine* publishes about one hundred and seventy thousand numbers a month, and surpasses any other publication of the kind in its circulation. The publishing establishment of the Messrs. Harper, the legitimate result of industry, discretion, energy, and probity, is justly the pride of New York, and one of the reflected glories of our literature, probably surpassing every other establishment of the kind in the world in its extent and the perfectness of its organization.

† The present eminent publishing house of Appleton & Co., consisting of Mr. W. Appleton and his four brothers, was founded by their father, Daniel Appleton, who came from New England to New York about the year 1826. He died in 1849, aged fifty-eight.

acknowledged metropolis of American literature, as well as of art and commerce. Nevertheless, if we look at Boston literature at the present time, as reflected in the publishing lists of Messrs. Little, Brown & Co., Ticknor & Fields, Philips, Sampson & Co., Crocker & Brewster, Gould & Lincoln, we shall see that the light of other days has not degenerated. Is it not augmented, indeed—for since the period I speak of, Prescott, Longfellow, Hawthorne, Whipple, Holmes, Lowell, Hillard, have joined the Boston constellation of letters?

It can not be interesting to you to know in detail my business operations in Boston at this period. It will be sufficient to say, that among other works I published an edition of the novels of Charles Brockden Brown, with a life of the author, furnished by his widow, she having a share of the edition. I also published an edition of Hannah More's works, and also of Mrs. Opie's works—these being, I believe, the first complete collections of the writings of these several authors. In 1827 I published Sketches by N. P. Willis, his first adventure in responsible authorship. The next year I issued the Common-place Book of Prose, the first work of the now celebrated Dr. Cheever. This was speedily followed by the Common-place Book of Poetry and Studies in Poetry, by the same author.\*

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\* Among my lesser publications were *Beauties of the Souvenirs, History of the Kings and Queens of France, Beauties of the Waverley Nov-*



In 1828, I published a first, and soon after a second, volume of the *Legendary*, designed as a periodical, and to consist of original pieces in prose and verse, principally illustrative of American history, scenery, and manners.\* This was edited by N. P. Willis, and was, I believe, his first editorial engagement. Among

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els, Blair's *Outlines of Ancient History*, Blair's *Outlines of Chronology*, Blair's *History of England*, C. A. Goodrich's *Outlines of Modern Geography*, the *American Journal of Education*, issued monthly, *Poems* by Mrs. Sigourney, *Records of the Spanish Inquisition*, translated from the original documents by S. Kettell, *Comstock's Mineralogy*, *Child's Botany*, *Sad Tales and Glad Tales* by G. Mellen, *Mary's Journey*, *Memoirs of a New England Village Choir*, *Specimens of American Poetry*, 3 vols., edited by S. Kettell, *Universal History*, illustrated, copied, with additions, from Straus, the *Garland of Flora*, *Balbi's Geography*, edited by T. G. Bradford, *Historical Cyclopædia*, edited by F. A. Durivage, and doubtless some others, which I have forgotten. These were mostly original works. After 1835, I ceased to be a publisher, except for my own works; since 1845, these have been entirely published by others.

\* I give a few extracts from a criticism of this work upon its first appearance: these will serve to show the estimate put upon some of the productions of popular authors at that time, by a noted critic; they will also show a state of things strikingly in contrast with the habits of the present day—for the reviewer found time and patience to notice, *seriatim*, every article in the book, some thirty in number. This was the day of great things in criticism, and small things in the production of materials for criticism.

#### “REVIEW.—THE LEGENDARY.

“It would be a reproach to our country, if the proprietor of a work of this nature, got up under circumstances so favorable to the growth of our native literature—even if the *Legendary* were no better than the mob of books that one may see every day of the year pouring forth out of the shops of people who pay more for puffs than for copyrights—a reproach to our country, I vow, if he were to suffer by the enterprise. If we are to have a literature of our own, we must pay for it; and they who are the first to pay for it, deserve to be the first to be repaid for it—with usury. \* \* \*

“The first of the tales, by the author of ‘*Hobomok*,’ is called the ‘*Church of the Wilderness*.’ Here we have the serene, bold, and beautiful style of writing which had to be found fault with in the review of

the contributors I find the names of Halleck, Crosby, Lunt, W. G. Clark, H. Pickering, J. O. Rockwell, Miss Sedgewick, Miss Francis, Mrs. Sigourney, Willis, Pierpont, Cutter, I. M'Lellan, Jr., J. W. Miller, and other popular writers of that day. It was kindly treated by the press, which generously published

'Hobomok'—no, not of 'Hobomok,' of some other story by the same author, the title of which I forget. What I said then, I say now.

"The second affair is a piece by a young man of this town—Wm. Cutter—whom I never suspected before of poetry. It is called the Valley of Silence,' and of a truth will bear to be treated as poetry. \* \* \* But I do not believe that in a poem of forty lines, it would be fair play for any author to repeat the same idea more than eighty times, or that HUSHING and RUSHING are altogether where they should be in the forty lines now before me. For example, we have a bird that '*hushed* his breath,' and we have the hush of the slumbering air, and we have echoes '*hushed* in their caves,' and a '*hush* that is grand, not awful,' and a '*hushed* worship,' and '*hushed* voices,' and all those by-baby-bunting epithets in one single poem! \* \* \*

"'Unwritten Poetry,' by N. P. W., the editor of the *Legendary*. There are touches of exquisite beauty in this paper, and not a little of what, to speak reverently of a brother poet, I should call heavenly nonsense. \* \* \*

"'Descriptive Sonnets,' by Mr. H. Pickering. I hate sonnets; I never saw a good one, and never shall.

"'The Clouds:' Grenville Mellen. Would this were better—would it were worthier of my young friend. Some of the ideas are beautiful, and some powerful; but the abrupt termination of almost every stanza, the truncated air of the finest passages—a line being a period by itself—who that knows poetry, or knows what poetry should be, can forgive?

"'The Pampas of Buenos Ayres,' by I. M'Lellan, jr. Here we have a poet; I do not mean to say that here we have poetry, or, properly speaking, much poetry—for some there certainly is in every paragraph; but simply that the author has within him a sure, and I believe a deep well of poetry. If he has, however, he will never know its depth, nor what riches may lie there, till the waters have been troubled—by an angel—if you like, for angels are mighty troublesome now, as well as of yore, to the fountains of life and health.

"'The Haunted Grave:' E. P. Blount. Never heard of this writer before. Who is he? He shows talent—strong, decided, peculiar talent.

"'Extract from a Journal,' &c. *Mellen*—hey? A mere scratch or

without charge, the best pieces in full, saving the reading million the trouble of buying the book and paying for the chaff, which was naturally found with the wheat. Despite this courtesy, the work proved a miserable failure. The time had not come for such a publication : at the present day, with the present

two of a free pen. The author, if it is he, will make a better figure in prose yet than he ever made in poetry. I do not speak of this paper, but of others that I know to be his.

“ ‘Grave of an Unknown Genius :’ Joseph H. Nichols. Good poetry here, though not much. The best is—

‘ And worthy of their harps was he,  
Worthy to wake with them, the grand  
War-anthem, or the music free  
Of love, *with burning lip and hand.*’

“ ‘Mere Accident :’ N. P. Willis. Rather too Tom Moorish. However, let that pass. For, do ye know, ye blue-eyed, fair-haired girls, and ye of the dark, lamping eyes and a shadowy crown—do ye not know that the old proverb about kissing and telling is not worth a fig ? I’ll give you a better one : ‘ They that kiss never tell—and they that tell never kiss.’

“ ‘The Nun,’ by Emma C. Manly. High and pure and sensible poetry. But who is Emma C. Manly ? Is it not another name for N. P. W. ?

“ ‘Romance in Real Life :’ author of Redwood. This very sensible and happy writer, if she had more courage, and were willing to tell the *very* truth and nothing but the truth of our country manners, would be more thought of a hundred years hence than she is now.

“ ‘Ascutney :’ Mrs. A. M. Wells. Upon my word, it is very encouraging to see what a few of our Yankee women are about in the world of literature. They only want fair play to shoot ahead of their teachers, the hatted ones of our earth.

“ ‘Telling the Dream :’ Willis. Heigho ! “Do dreams always prove true, Ianthe ?” I say, brother Willis, you deserve to be whipped backward through your alphabet for the false quantity in that last line—the very pith and marrow of the whole poem. Up with your fingers, and count them ; out with your hand for the ferule, or shut your eyes and open your mouth, like a good boy, and \*see what the ladies will send you. And then—‘Do dreams always prove true, Ianthe ?’ \* \* \*

“ ‘The Bruce’s Heart,’ by the author of ‘Moral Pieces.’ Very good poetry, and very like what a ballad of our time should be—a ballad of

accessories, and the present public spirit, I doubt not that such an enterprise would be eminently successful.

I believe I have already alluded to the Age of Annuals\*—the first work of the kind, entitled the Forget-me-not, having been issued by the Ackermans of London, in the winter of 1823, while I was in that city. It was successfully imitated by Carey & Lea, at Philadelphia, in a work entitled the Atlantic Souvenir, and which was sustained with great spirit for several years. In 1828 I commenced and published the first volume of the Token, and which I continued for fifteen years, editing it myself, with the exception of the volume for 1829, which came out under the auspices of Mr. Willis. In 1836 the Atlantic Souvenir ceased, and after that time, by arrangement with the publishers, its title was added to that of the Token.

the war, I mean. But—I have always a *but* in reserve, you know—why deal so with the Moors? \* \* \*

“ ‘Columbus,’ by J. W. Miller. This man must be capable of writing magnificent poetry. The proof:

Stands he upon the narrow deck  
Of yon lone caravel,  
Whose tall shape *as with princely beak*  
*Bound to the heaving swell;*  
And when the conqueror o’er her side  
Crossed meekly, *rose with living pride.*”

*From the Yankee, June 28, 1823.*

\* We are doubtless indebted to the Germans for originating the race of Annuals, but Ackerman’s Forget-me-not was the first attempt at producing them with all the luxurious embellishments of art, and which became, in fact, their distinctive characteristic. At first the literary department was held inferior to the mechanical, but at last, Scott, Rogers, Campbell, Mrs. Hemans, Moore, &c., in England, and Bryant, Irving, Halleck, in America, became contributors to these works; nay, Bryant, Sands, and Verplanck produced in New York an annual entitled the Talisman, and which was continued for three years

The success of this species of publication, stimulated new enterprises of the kind, and a rage for them spread over Europe and America. The efforts of the first artists and the first writers were at length drawn into them, and for nearly twenty years every autumn produced an abundant harvest of Diadems, Bijoux, Pearls, Gems, Amethysts, Opals, Amaranths, Bouquets, Hyacinths, Amulets, Talismans, Forget-memots, Remember-me's, &c.\* Under these seductive titles, they became messengers of love, tokens of friendship, signs and symbols of affection, and luxury and refinement; and thus they stole alike into the palace and the cottage, the library, the parlor, and the boudoir. The public taste grew by feeding on these

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\* Besides these Annuals, there were, in England and the United States, the following:

Gift, Keepsake, Souvenir, Literary Souvenir, Boudoir, Floral Offering, Friendship's Offering, Iris, Laurel, Wreath, Jewel, Cabinet, Drawing-room Annual, Pictorial Annual, Continental Annual, Picturesque Annual, Fancy Annual, Court Album, Anniversary, Pearls of the East, Pearls of the West, The Favorite, The Rhododendron, The Waif, The Gleaner, The Rose, and many others. Among the works which may be considered as successors of the Annuals, being all splendidly illustrated, there were Tableaux of Prose and Poetry, Baronial Halls of England, Authors of England, Artist's Sketch Book, Book of Art, Book of the Passions, Calendar of Nature, Continental Sketches, Etched Thoughts, Finden's Tableaux, Wanderings of Pen and Pencil, Tales of the Brave and the Fair, Poetry of the Year, British Ballads, Book of Art, Book of the Passions, Gems of British Poetry, Lays of Ancient Rome, and a multitude of others.

The effect of the circulation of such works as these, in creating and extending a taste for the arts, and in their most exquisite forms, can only be appreciated by those who have examined and reflected upon the subject. Even in the United States alone, four thousand volumes of one of these works, at the price of twelve dollars each, have been sold in a single season! Not five hundred would have been sold in the same space of time, twenty years ago.

luscious gifts, and soon craved even more gorgeous works of the kind, whence came Heath's Book of Beauty, Lady Blessington's Flowers of Loveliness, Bulwer's Pilgrims of the Rhine, Butler's Leaflets of Memory, Christmas among the Poets, and many others of similar design and execution. Many of the engravings of these works cost five hundred dollars each, and many a piece of poetry, fifty dollars a page. In several of these works the generous public spent fifty thousand dollars a year!

At last the race of Annuals drew near the end of its career, yet not without having produced a certain revolution in the public taste. Their existence had sprung, at least in part, from steel-engraving, which had been discovered and introduced by our countryman, Jacob Perkins. This enabled the artist to produce works of more exquisite delicacy than had ever before been achieved; steel also gave the large number of impressions which the extensive sales of the Annuals demanded, and which could not have been obtained from copper. These charming works scattered the very gems of art far and wide, making the reading mass familiar with the finest specimens of engraving, and not only cultivating an appetite for this species of luxury, but in fact exalting the general standard of taste all over the civilized world.

And thus, though the Annuals, by name, have perished, they left a strong necessity in the public mind for books enriched by all the embellishments of art.



Hence we have such works as the *Women of the Bible*, *Women of the New Testament*, the *Republican Court*, by Dr. Griswold, together with rich illustrated editions of Byron, Rogers, Thomson, Cowper, Campbell, and others, including our own poets—Bryant, Halleck, Sigourney, Longfellow, Reed, &c. Wood-engraving has, meanwhile, risen into a fine art, and lent its potent aid in making books one of the chief luxuries of society, from the nursery to the parlor.

In comparison with these splendid works, the *Token* was a very modest affair. The first year I offered prizes for the best pieces in prose and poetry. The highest for prose was awarded to the author of "Some Passages in the Life of an Old Maid." A mysterious man, in a mysterious way, presented himself for the money, and, giving due evidence of his authority to receive it, it was paid to him, but who the author really was, never transpired, though I had, and still have, my confident guess upon the subject.\* Even the subsequent volumes, though they obtained favor in their day, did not approach the splendor of the modern works of a similar kind. Nevertheless, some of the embellishments, by John Cheney,†

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\* The prizes were one hundred dollars for the best piece in prose, and the same for the best in verse. The judges—Charles Sprague, F. W. P. Greenwood, and J. Pierpont—hesitated between two pieces for the latter: *The Soldier's Widow*, by Willis, and *Connecticut River*, by Mrs. Sigourney. They finally recommended that the prize be divided between them, which was accepted by the authors.

† John Cheney, who may be regarded as the first of American engravers in sweetness of expression and delicacy of execution, was a native of



Ellis, Smilie, Andrews, Hatch, Kelly, Danforth, Durand, and Jewett, engraved from the designs of Allston, Leslie, Newton, Cole, Inman, Fisher, Doughty, Chapman, Weir, Brown, Alexander, and Healey, were very clever, even compared with the finest works of art at the present day.

The literary contributions were, I believe, equal, on the whole, to any of the *Annuaux*, American or European. Here were inserted some of the earliest productions of Willis, Hawthorne, Miss Francis, now Mrs. Child, Miss Sedgewick, Mrs. Hale, Pierpont, Greenwood, and Longfellow. Several of these first made acquaintance with the public through the pages of this work. It is a curious fact that the latter, Longfellow, wrote prose, and at that period had shown neither a strong bias nor a particular talent for poetry.

The *Token* was continued annually till 1842, when it finally ceased. The day of *Annuaux* had, indeed, passed before this was given up, and the last

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Manchester, eight miles east of Hartford, Conn. When I first met him, he was working at Hartford with Mr. Willard, a map engraver. I encouraged him to come to Boston, and for several years, during which time he visited London and Paris, he was wholly employed for the *Token*. His brother Seth, not less celebrated for his admirable portraits in crayon, was also induced to come to Boston by me, making my house at Jamaica Plain, his stopping place at the beginning. Both these admirable artists are wholly self-taught. They have six brothers, the youngest of whom made some valuable improvement in machinery which led to the establishment of a silk manufactory at their native place, which some of the rest have joined, and it has made all rich who are concerned in it.

two or three years, it had only lingered out a poor and fading existence. As a matter of business, it scarcely paid its expenses, and was a serious drawback upon my time and resources for fifteen years—a punishment no doubt fairly due to an obstinate pride which made me reluctant to allow a work to die in my hands, with which my name and feelings had become somewhat identified.



## LETTER XLVI.

*The Contributors to the Token—N. P. Willis—N. Hawthorne—Miss Francis—Mr. Greenwood—Mr. Pierpont—Charles Sprague—Mrs. Sigourney—Miss Sedgwick—Mrs. Osgood, and others—Quarrels between Authors and Publishers—Anecdotes—The Publishers' Festival.*

MY DEAR C \*\*\*\*\*

As to the contributors for the *Token*, you may expect me to say a few words more. The most prominent writer for it was N. P. Willis; his articles were the most read, the most admired, the most abused, and the most advantageous to the work. I published his first book, and his two first editorial engagements were with me; hence the early portion of his literary career fell under my special notice.

He had begun to write verses very early, and while in college, before he was eighteen, he had acquired an extended reputation, under the signature of Roy. In

1827, when he was just twenty years old, I published his volume entitled "Sketches." It brought out quite a shower of criticism, in which praise and blame were about equally dispensed: at the same time the work sold with a readiness quite unusual for a book of poetry at that period. It is not calculated to establish the infallibility of critics, to look over these notices at the present day: many of the pieces which were doubly damned have now taken their place among the acknowledged gems of our literature, and others, which excited praise at the time, have faded from the public remembrance.

One thing is certain—everybody thought Willis worth criticising.\* He has been, I suspect, more writ-

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\* In 1831, there appeared in Boston a little book, of some fifty or sixty pages, entitled, "Truth: A New Year's Gift for Scribblers." It was written by Joseph Snelling, who had been, I believe, an under officer in the United States army, and stationed in the Northwest, perhaps at Prairie du Chien. He came to Boston, and acquired some notoriety as a nervous and daring writer—his chief desire seeming to be, notoriety. The work was little more than a string of abuse, without regard to justice; yet it was executed with point and vigor, and as it attacked everybody who had written verses, it caused a good deal of wincing. The following is the exordium:

"Moths, millers, gnats, and butterflies, I sing,  
Far-darting Phœbus, lend my strain a sting;  
Much-courted virgins, long-enduring Nine,  
Screw tight the catgut of this lyre of mine:  
If D-na, D-wes, and P-rp-nt ask your aid,  
If W-ll-s takes to rhyming as a trade,  
If L-nt and F-nn to Pindus' top aspire,  
I too may blameless beg one spark of fire;  
Not such as warmed the brains of Pope and Swift—  
With less assistance I can make a shift:  
To Gifford's bow and shafts I lay no claim—  
He shot at hawks, but I at insects aim:  
Yet grant, since I must war on little things,  
Just flame enough to singe their puny wings;

ten about than any other literary man in our history. Some of the attacks upon him proceeded, no doubt, from a conviction that he was a man of extraordinary gifts, and yet of extraordinary affectations, and the lash was applied in kindness, as that of a school-master to a loved pupil's back; some of them were dictated by envy, for we have had no other example of literary success so early, so general, and so flattering. That Mr. Willis made mistakes in literature and life—at the outset—may be admitted by his best

A feather besom, too, to bring them down,  
And pins to stick them in my beaver's crown."

\* \* \* \* \*

Here are specimens from the body of the work :

"The wax still sticking to his fingers' ends,  
The upstart Wh-tt-r, for example, lends  
The world important aid to understand  
What's said, and sung, and printed in the land."

\* \* \* \* \*

"'Tis plain the county Cumberland, in Maine,  
Contains no hospital for folks insane :  
Though never there, the fact I nothing doubt,  
Since N-al and M-ll-n run at large about.  
When the moon waxes, plaintive M-ll-n howls ;  
But Johnny, like a bull-dog, snaps and growls ;  
Or strikes his brother poetasters mute  
With harsh vibrations on his three-stringed lute."

\* \* \* \* \*

"Dear Halleck, Nature's favorite and mine,  
Curst be the hand that plucks a hair of thine :  
Accept the tribute of a muse inclined  
To bow to nothing, save the power of mind.  
Bard of Bozzaris, shall thy native shore  
List to thy harp and mellow voice no more ?  
Shall we, with skill like thine so nigh at hand,  
Import our music from a foreign land ?  
While Mirror M-rr-s chants in whimpering note,  
And croaking D-na strains his screech-owl throat ;  
While crazy N-al to meter shakes his chains,  
And fools are found to listen to his strains ;  
While childish Natty P. the public diddles,  
And L-nt and R-ckw-ll scrape his second fiddles ;

friends; for it must be remembered that before he was five-and-twenty, he was more read than any other American poet of his time; and besides, being possessed of an easy and captivating address, he became the pet of society, and especially of the fairer portion of it. Since that period, his life, on the whole, has been one of serious, useful, and successful labor. His reputation as a poet has hardly advanced, and probably the public generally regard some of his early verses as his best. As an essayist, however, he

While Brooks, and Sands, and Smith, and either Clark,  
In chase of Phœbus, howl, and yelp, and bark—  
Wilt thou be silent? Wake, O Halleck, wake!  
Thine and thy country's honor are at stake!  
Wake, and redeem the pledge—thy vantage keep;  
'Tis pity, one like thee so long should sleep!"

\*            \*            \*            \*            \*

"One bard there is I almost fear to name,  
Much doubting whether to applaud or blame.  
In P-re-v-l's productions, wheat and chaff  
Are mixed, like sailor's tippie, half and half;  
But, duly bolted through the critic's mill,  
I find the better part is wholesome still."

The following is a part of the amiable notice bestowed upon Willis :

"Muse, shall we not a few brief lines afford  
To give poor Natty P. his meet reward?  
What has he done to be despised by all  
Within whose hands his harmless scribblings fall?  
Why, as in handbox-trim he walks the streets,  
Turns up the nose of every man he meets,  
As if it scented carrion? Why, of late,  
Do all the critics claw his shallow pate?  
True, he's a fool;—if that's a hanging thing,  
Let Pr-nt-ce, Wh-tt-r, M-ll-n also swing."

Willis replied contemptuously, but effectively, in some half-dozen verses inserted in the *Statesman*, and addressed to *Smelling* Joseph. The lines stuck to poor Snelling for the remainder of his life, and I suspect, in fact, contributed to his downfall. As he had attacked everybody, everybody joined in the chuckle. He soon fell into habits of dissipation, which led from one degradation to another, till his miserable career was ended.

stands in the first rank, distinguished for a keen sagacity in analyzing society, a fine perception of the beauties of nature, an extraordinary talent for endowing trifles with interest and meaning. As a traveler, he is among the most entertaining, sagacious, and instructive. It is within my knowledge, that Mr. Webster was an admiring reader of his itinerary sketches.

His style is certainly peculiar—and is deemed affected, tending to an excess of refinement, and displaying an undue hankering for grace and melody—sometimes sacrificing sense to sound. This might once have been a just criticism, but the candid reader of his works now before the public, will deem it hypercritical. His style is suited to his thought; it is flexible, graceful, musical, and is adapted to the playful wit, the spicy sentiment, the dramatic tableaux, the artistic paintings of sea, earth, and sky, of which they are the vehicle. In the seeming exhaustlessness of his resources, in his prolonged freshness, in his constantly increasing strength, Mr. Willis has refuted all the early prophets who regarded him only as a precocity, destined to shine a few brief years, and fade away.

As to his personal character, I need only say that from the beginning, he has had a larger circle of steadfast friends than almost any man within my knowledge. There has been something in his works which has made the fair sex, generally, alike his lite-



rary and personal admirers. For so many favors, he has given the world an ample return; for, with all his imputed literary faults—some real and some imaginary—I regard him as having contributed more to the amusement of society than almost any other of our living authors.\*

It is not easy to conceive of a stronger contrast than is presented by comparing Nathaniel Hawthorne with N. P. Willis. The former was for a time one of the principal writers for the *Token*, and his admirable sketches were published side by side with those of the latter. Yet it is curious to remark that every thing Willis wrote attracted immediate attention, and excited ready praise, while the productions of Hawthorne were almost entirely unnoticed.

The personal appearance and demeanor of these two gifted young men, at the early period of which I speak, was also in striking contrast. Willis was slender, his hair sunny and silken, his cheek ruddy, his aspect cheerful and confident. He met society with a ready and welcome hand, and was received readily and with welcome. Hawthorne, on the contrary, was of a rather sturdy form, his hair dark and

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\* Mr. N. P. Willis was the son of Nathaniel Willis, of Boston, originally a printer, but for a long time an editor, and much respected for his industry, his good sense, his devotion to whatever he deemed his duty, and his useful services rendered to morals, religion, Christianity, and philanthropy. His wife was a woman of uncommon mental endowments; her conversation was elegant, full of taste, reading, and refinement. The beautiful tributes which N. P. Willis has rendered to her memory, are no more than was due from a gifted son to a gifted mother.



bushy, his eye steel-gray, his brow thick, his mouth sarcastic, his complexion stony, his whole aspect cold, moody, distrustful. He stood aloof, and surveyed the world from shy and sheltered positions.

There was a corresponding difference in the writings of these two persons. Willis was all sunshine and summer, the other chill, dark, and wintry; the one was full of love and hope, the other of doubt and distrust; the one sought the open daylight—sunshine, flowers, music, and found them everywhere—the other plunged into the dim caverns of the mind, and studied the grisly specters of jealousy, remorse, despair. It is, perhaps, neither a subject of surprise nor regret, that the larger portion of the world is so happily constituted as to have been more ready to flirt with the gay muse of the one, than to descend into the spiritual charnel-house, and assist at the psychological dissections of the other.

I had seen some anonymous publication which seemed to me to indicate extraordinary powers. I inquired of the publishers as to the writer, and through them a correspondence ensued between me and "N. Hawthorne." This name I considered a disguise, and it was not till after many letters had passed, that I met the author, and found it to be a true title, representing a very substantial personage. At this period he was unsettled as to his views; he had tried his hand in literature, and considered himself to have met with a fatal rebuff from the reading

world. His mind vacillated between various projects, verging, I think, toward a mercantile profession. I combated his despondence, and assured him of triumph, if he would persevere in a literary career.

He wrote numerous articles, which appeared in the *Token*; occasionally an astute critic seemed to see through them, and to discover the soul that was in them; but in general they passed without notice. Such articles as *Sights from a Steeple*, *Sketches beneath an Umbrella*, the *Wives of the Dead*, the *Prophetic Pictures*, now universally acknowledged to be productions of extraordinary depth, meaning, and power, extorted hardly a word of either praise or blame, while columns were given to pieces since totally forgotten. I felt annoyed, almost angry indeed, at this. I wrote several articles in the papers, directing attention to these productions, and finding no echo of my views, I recollect to have asked John Pickering\* to read some of them, and give me his opinion of them. He did as I requested; his answer was that they displayed a wonderful beauty of style, with a kind of double vision, a sort of second sight, which revealed, beyond the outward forms of life and being, a sort of spirit world, somewhat as a

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\* John Pickering, son of Timothy Pickering, Washington's Secretary of State, was a distinguished jurist and philologist, and a refined and amiable gentleman. A good notice of him is given in Messrs. Duyckinck's excellent *Cyclopedia of American Literature*, vol. i. page 625. To this, by the way, I have often been indebted for assistance in the preparation of this work.

lake reflects the earth around it and the sky above it: yet he deemed them too mystical to be popular. He was right, no doubt, at that period, but, ere long, a portion of mankind, a large portion of the reading world, obtained a new sense—how or where or whence, is not easily determined—which led them to study the mystical, to dive beneath and beyond the senses, and to discern, gather, and cherish gems and pearls of price in the hidden depths of the soul. Hawthorne was, in fact, a kind of Wordsworth in prose—less kindly, less genial toward mankind, but deeper and more philosophical. His fate was similar: at first he was neglected, at last he had worshippers.

In 1837, I recommended Mr. Hawthorne to publish a volume, comprising his various pieces, which had appeared in the *Token* and elsewhere. He consented, but as I had ceased to be a publisher, it was difficult to find any one who would undertake to bring out the work. I applied to the agent of the Stationers' Company,\* but he refused, until at last I

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\* The Stationers' Company, organized in the autumn of 1836, was a joint-stock company, in which some of the leading lawyers and literary men of Boston engaged, with a view of publishing original American works of a high character, and in such a way as to render due compensation and encouragement to authors. One of the works which then sought a publisher, without success, was Prescott's *Ferdinand and Isabella*—it being at that day supposed to be absurd for Americans to presume to write general histories. This was in fact one of the first works issued by this concern. In 1838 the country was suffering under a state of general commercial panic and paralysis, and this company was precipitated into the gulf of bankruptcy, with thousands of others. Though

relinquished my copyrights on such of the tales as I had published, to Mr. Hawthorne, and joined a friend of his in a bond to indemnify them against loss ; and thus the work was published by the Stationers' Company, under the title of *Twice Told Tales*, and for the author's benefit. It was deemed a failure for more than a year, when a breeze seemed to rise and fill its sails, and with it the author was carried on to fame and fortune.

Among the most successful of the writers for the *Token* was Miss Francis, now Mrs. Child. I have not seen her for many years, but I have many pleasant remembrances of her lively conversation, her saucy wit, her strong good sense, and her most agreeable person and presence. To Rev. F. W. P. Greenwood—the author of “*Niagara*” and the “*Sea*”—articles which are still admired by all tasteful readers—I was indebted not only for some of the best contributions, but for excellent counsel and advice in my literary affairs. He was a man of fine genius, gentle manners, and apostolic dignity of life and character.

To Mr. Pierpont, I was indebted for encouragement and sympathy in my whole career, and for some of the best poems which appeared in the work I am noticing. I remember once to have met him, and to have

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I was a hesitating and reluctant subscriber to the stock, and in fact was the last to join the association, I still shared largely—I may say fatally—in its misfortunes. It entailed upon me the loss of the little property I had accumulated, and embarrassments which have haunted me to the present day.

asked him to give me a contribution for the Token. He stopped and said, reflectingly, "I had a dream not long ago, which I have thought to put into verse. I will try, and if I am successful you shall have it." A few days after he gave me the lines, now in all the gem books, beginning—

"Was it the chime of a tiny bell,  
That came so sweet to my dreaming ear—  
Like the silvery tones of a fairy's shell,  
That he winds on the beach so mellow and clear,  
When the winds and the waves lie together asleep,  
And the moon and the fairy are watching the deep—  
She dispensing her silvery light,  
And he his notes, as silvery quite,  
While the boatman listens and ships his oar,  
To catch the music that comes from the shore?  
Hark! the notes on my ear that play,  
Are set to words; as they float, they say,  
'Passing away, passing away!'"

Charles Sprague wrote for me but little, yet that was of diamond worth. Next to Willis, Mrs. Sigourney was my most successful and liberal contributor; to her I am indebted for a large part of the success of my editorial labors in the matter now referred to. To Miss Sedgwick, also, the Token owes a large share of its credit with the public. Grenville Mellen—a true poet, and a most kind, gentle spirit, doomed early to "pass away"—was a favorite in my pages, and to me a devoted friend. To B. B. Thacher—also among the good and the departed; to Mrs. Osgood,

gifted and gone ; to John Neale, A. H. Everett, Bishop Doane, Mr. Longfellow, Caleb Cushing ; to the two Sargents—Epes and John, though masked as Charles Sherry or the modest letter E. ; to Miss Gould, Miss Leslie, H. T. Tuckerman, O. W. Holmes, Orville Dewey, J. T. Fields, T. S. Fay, G. C. Verplanck—to all these and to many others, I owe the kind remembrance which belongs to good deeds, kindly and graciously bestowed.

It is not to be supposed that in a long career, both as bookseller and editor, I should have escaped altogether the annoyances and vexations which naturally attach to these vocations. The relation of author and publisher is generally regarded as that of the cat and the dog, both greedy of the bone, and inherently jealous of each other. The authors have hitherto written the accounts of the wrangles between these two parties, and the publishers have been traditionally gibbeted as a set of mean, mercenary wretches, coining the heart's blood of genius for their own selfish profits. Great minds, even in modern times, have not been above this historical prejudice. The poet Campbell is said to have been an admirer of Napoleon because he shot a bookseller.

Nevertheless, speaking from my own experience, I suspect, if the truth were told, that, even in cases where the world has been taught to bestow all its sympathy in behalf of the author, it would appear that while there were claws on one side there were



teeth on the other. My belief is, that where there have been quarrels, there have generally been mutual provocations. I know of nothing more vexatious, more wearisome, more calculated to beget impatience, than the egotisms, the exactions, the unreasonablenesses of authors, in cases I have witnessed.\*

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\* I could give some curious instances of this. A schoolmaster came to me once with a marvelously clever grammar: it was sure to overturn all others. He had figured out his views in a neat hand, like copper-plate. He estimated that there were always a million of children at school who would need his grammar; providing for books worn out, and a supply for new-comers, half a million would be wanted every year. At one cent a copy for the author—which he insisted was exceedingly moderate—this would produce to him five thousand dollars a year, but if I would publish the work he would condescend to take half that sum annually, during the extent of the copyright—twenty-eight years! I declined, and he seriously believed me a heartless block-head. He obtained a publisher at last, but the work never reached a second edition. Every publisher is laden with similar experiences.

I once employed a young man to block out some little books to be published under the nominal authorship of Solomon Bell; these I remodeled, and one or two volumes were issued. Some over-astute critic announced them as veritable Peter Parleys, and they had a sudden sale. The young man who had assisted me, and who was under the most solemn obligations to keep the matter secret, thought he had an opportunity to make his fortune; so he publicly claimed the authorship, and accused me of duplicity! The result was, that the books fell dead from that hour; the series was stopped, and his unprinted manuscripts, for which I had paid him, became utterly worthless. A portion I burnt, and a portion still remain amidst the rubbish of other days.

In other instances, I was attacked in the papers, editorially and personally, by individuals who were living upon the employment I gave them. I was in daily intercourse with persons of this character, who, while flattering me to my face, I knew to be hawking at me in print. These I regarded and treated as trifles at the time; they are less than trifles now. One thing may be remarked, that, in general, such difficulties come from poor and unsuccessful writers. They have been taught that publishers and booksellers are vampires, and naturally feed upon the vitals of genius; assuming—honestly, no doubt—that they are of this latter class, they feel no great scruple in taking vengeance upon those whom they regard as their natural enemies.



That there may be examples of meanness, stupidity, and selfishness, in publishers, is indisputable. But in general, I am satisfied that an author who will do justice to a publisher, will have justice in return.

In judging of publishers, one thing should be considered, and that is, that two-thirds of the original works issued by them, are unprofitable. An eminent London publisher once told me that he calculated that out of ten publications, four involved a positive, and often a heavy, loss; three barely paid the cost of paper, print, and advertising; and three paid a profit. Nothing is more common than for a publisher to pay money to an author, every farthing of which is lost. Self-preservation, therefore, compels the publisher to look carefully to his operations. One thing is certain—he is generally the very best judge as to the value of a book, in a marketable point of view: if he rejects it, it is solely because he thinks it will not pay, not because he despises genius.

Happily, at the present day, the relations between these two parties—authors and publishers—are on a better footing than in former times: the late Festival\*

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My editorial experience also furnished me with some amusing anecdotes. An editor of a periodical once sent me an article for the *Token*, entitled *La Longue-vue*; the pith of the story consisted in a romantic youth's falling in love with a young lady, two miles off, through a telescope! I ventured to reject it, and the *Token* for that year was duly damned in the columns of the offended author.

And yet, while noticing these trifles, I am bound to say distinctly, that, on the whole, I have had generous and encouraging treatment from the press, and most kindly intercourse with authors.

\* The Complimentary Fruit Festival of the New York Book Publish-

in New York, given by the publishers to the authors, was a happy testimonial to the prevailing feeling that both are partners in the fellowship of literature, and that mutual good offices will best contribute to mutual prosperity. Indeed, a great change has taken place in the relative positions of the two classes. Nothing is now more marketable than good writing—at least in this country—whatever may be its form—poetry or prose, fact or fiction, reason or romance. Starving, neglected, abused genius, is a myth of bygone times. If an author is poorly paid, it is because he writes poorly. I do not think, indeed, that authors are adequately paid, for authorship does not stand on a level with other professions as to pecuniary recompense, but it is certain that a clever, industrious, and judicious writer may make his talent the means of living.\*

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ers' Association to Authors and Booksellers, took place at the Crystal Palace, September 27, 1855, and was one of the most gratifying and suggestive occasions I ever witnessed. The opening address of the president, Mr. W. Appleton, the introductory statistical sketch, by Mr. G. P. Putnam, the genial toasts, the excellent letters of Charles Sumner, Edward Everett, and R. C. Winthrop; the admirable speech of W. C. Bryant, the eloquent addresses of Messrs. Milburn, Allen, Chapin, Os-good, Beecher, together with the witty and instructive poem by J. T. Fields—all together marked it as an era of prodigious interest in our literary annals.

\* I am here speaking particularly of the state of things in America at the present day. No man has more cause to know and feel the disappointments, the wear and tear of health, the headaches, the heart-aches, which attend authorship as a profession and a means of support, than myself. No one has more cause to feel and remember the illusiveness of literary ambition, perhaps I may say of even humble literary success. In most cases, these are only obtained at the expense of shattered nerves and broken constitutions, leaving small means of enjoying what has

## LETTER XLVII.

*The First of the Parley Books—Its Reception—Various Publications—Threatening Attack of Illness—Voyage to Europe—Consultation of Physicians at Paris—Sir Benj. Brodie, of London—Abercrombie, of Edinburgh—Return to America—Residence in the Country—Prosecution of my Literary Labors.*

MY DEAR C\*\*\*\*\*

Though I was busily engaged in publishing various works, I found time to make my long meditated experiment in the writing of books for children. The first attempt was made in 1827, and bore the title of the Tales of Peter Parley about America. No persons but my wife and one of my sisters were admitted to the secret—for in the first place, I hesitated to believe that I was qualified to appear before the public as an author, and in the next place, nursery literature had not then acquired the respect in the eyes of the world it now enjoys. It is since that period, that persons of acknowledged genius—Scott,

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been thus dearly won. Still it is quite true that if a man has talent, and is wise and moderate, and if he feels and practises Agur's prayer, he may live by authorship; if he aspires to easy independence, let him rather drudge in almost any other employment. As an amusement to a man of fortune, who is also a man of genius, authorship is a glorious pastime; to men of other and more active and profitable professions, it is often an inspiring episode; but to one who has no resources but his brains, it is too often the coining of his heart's blood to feed his family. One thing should never be forgotten by those who are tempted to follow a literary career, that not one author in a hundred attains success in life by this profession alone.

Dickens, Lamartine, Mary Howitt, in Europe, and Abbott, Todd, Gallaudet, Miss Sedgwick, Mrs. Child, and others, in America, have stooped to the composition of books for children and youth.

I published my little book, and let it make its way. It came before the world untrumpeted, and for some months seemed not to attract the slightest attention. Suddenly I began to see notices of it in the papers, all over the country, and in a year from the date of its publication, it had become a favorite. In 1828, I published the *Tales of Peter Parley* about Europe; in 1829, *Parley's Winter Evening Tales*; in 1830, *Parley's Juvenile Tales*, and *Parley's Asia, Africa, Sun, Moon, and Stars*. About this time the public guessed my secret—it being first discovered and divulged by a woman—Mrs. Sarah J. Hale, to whom, by the way, I am indebted for many kind offices in my literary career—yet I could have wished she had not done me this questionable favor. Though the authorship of the *Parley* books has been to me a source of some gratification, you will see, in the sequel, that it has also subjected me to endless vexations.

I shall not weary you with a detail of my proceedings at this busy and absorbed period of my life. I had now obtained a humble position in literature, and was successful in such unambitious works as I attempted. I gave myself up almost wholly for about four years—that is, from 1828 to 1832—to author-

ship, generally writing fourteen hours a day. A part of the time I was entirely unable to read, and could write but little, on account of the weakness of my eyes. In my larger publications, I employed persons to block out work for me; this was read to me, and then I put it into style, generally writing by dictation, my wife being my amanuensis. Thus embarrassed, I still, by dint of incessant toil, produced five or six volumes a year, mostly small, but some of larger compass.

In the midst of these labors—that is, in the spring of 1832—I was suddenly attacked with symptoms, which seemed to indicate a disease of the heart, rapidly advancing to a fatal termination. In the course of a fortnight I was so reduced as not to be able to mount a pair of stairs without help, and a short walk produced palpitations of the heart, which in several instances almost deprived me of consciousness. There seemed no hope but in turning my back upon my business, and seeking a total change of scene and climate. In May I embarked for England, and after a few weeks reached Paris. I here applied to Baron Larroque, who, assisted by L'Herminier—both eminent specialists in diseases of the heart—subjected me to various experiments, but without the slightest advantage. At this period I was obliged to be carried up stairs, and never ventured to walk or ride alone, being constantly subject to nervous spasms, which often brought me to the verge of suffocation.

Despairing of relief here, I returned to London, and was carefully examined by Sir B. C. Brodie.\* He declared that I had no organic disease, that my difficulty was nervous irritability, and that whereas the French physicians had interdicted wine and required me to live on a light vegetable diet, I must feed well upon good roast beef, and take two generous glasses of port with my dinner! Thus encouraged, I passed on to Edinburgh, where I consulted Abercrombie,† then at the height of his fame. He confirmed the views of Dr. Brodie, in the main, and regarding the irregularities of my vital organs as merely functional, still told me that, without shortening my life, they would probably never be wholly removed. He told me of an instance in which a patient of his, who, having been called upon to testify before the committee of the House of Commons, in the trial of Warren Hast-

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\* Sir Benjamin C. Brodie was at this time one of the most eminent surgeons in London. His reputation has since even been enhanced; his various publications—*Clinical Lectures in Surgery*, *Pathological and Surgical Observations on Diseases of the Joints*, *Lectures on Diseases of the Urinary Organs*, and *Surgical Works*—all of which have been published in this country—have given him a world-wide fame. It was not a little remarkable to me, to find a man of his eminence thus positively and authoritatively reversing the recommendations of French practitioners, of hardly inferior fame. Of one thing I am convinced, that for us Anglo-Saxons an Anglo-Saxon practitioner is much better than a Gallic one. I shall have a few words more to say on this subject.

† Dr. John Abercrombie held the highest rank in his profession at this period. He was still more distinguished as a writer, his *Inquiries concerning the Intellectual Powers* being published in 1830, and his *Philosophy of the Moral Feelings* in 1833. He was a man of refined personal appearance, and most gentle manners. He died in 1844, aged 63.



ings — from mere embarrassment—had been seized with palpitation of the heart, which, however, continued till his death, many years after. Even this somber view of my case was then a relief. Four and twenty years have passed since that period, and thus far my experience has verified Dr. Abercrombie's prediction. These nervous attacks pursue me to this day, yet I have become familiar with them, and regarding them only as troublesome visitors, I receive them patiently and bow them out as gently as I can.\*

After an absence of six months I returned to Boston, and by the advice of my physician took up my residence in the country. I built a house at Jamaica Plain, four miles from the city, and here I continued for more than twenty years. My health was partially restored, and I resumed my literary labors, which I

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\* I make this statement chiefly because I think it may be useful to persons, who, like myself, have abused their constitutions by sedentary habits and excessive mental labor, and who consequently are afflicted with nervous attacks, putting on the semblance of organic diseases of the heart. Not long since, I met with an old friend, a physician, who had abandoned his profession for authorship: with a dejected countenance he told me he was sinking under a disease of the heart! I inquired his symptoms, which corresponded with my own. I related to him my experience. A few days after I met him, and saw in his cheerful face that I had cured him. I give this prescription gratis to all my literary friends: let them beware of overtasking the brain; but if they do make this mistake, let them not lay the consequent irregularities of the vital organs to the heart. In nine cases out of ten they belong to the head—to the nervous system—which centers in the brain. Get that right by bodily exercise, by cheerful intercourse with friends, by a conscience void of offense, by generous living, by early rising and early going to bed, and by considering that the body will always take vengeance upon the mind, if the latter is permitted to abuse the former.



continued, steadily, from 1833 to 1850, with a few episodes of lecturing and legislating, three voyages to Europe, and an extensive tour to the South. It would be tedious and unprofitable to you, were I even to enumerate my various works—produced from the beginning to the present time. I may sum up the whole in a single sentence: I am the author and editor of about one hundred and seventy volumes, and of these seven millions have been sold!

## LETTER XLVIII.

*Republication of Parley's Tales in London—Mr. Tegg's operations—Imitated by other publishers.*

MY DEAR C\*\*\*\*\*

When I was in London, in 1832, I learned that Mr. Tegg, then a prominent publisher there, had commenced the republication of Parley's Tales. I called upon him, and found that he had one of them actually in press. The result of our interview was a contract,\* in which I engaged to prepare several

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\* As my claim to the authorship of the Parley Tales has been disputed in London, by interested publishers, I may as well copy the contract made with Mr. Tegg, which is now before me. It is, I believe, universally admitted that the works published by him, were the first that introduced the name of Peter Parley to the public there, and as the contract explicitly refers them to me, it seems there should be no further doubt on the subject.

"MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT, between Thomas Tegg, publisher, of London, and S. G. Goodrich, of Boston, United States of America:

"The said S. G. Goodrich having written and compiled several works, as Peter Parley's Tales of Animals, Peter Parley's Tales of America, of Europe, of Asia, of Africa, of the Sea, of the Islands in the Pacific Ocean, of the Sun, Moon, and Stars, &c., &c.

"Now said Goodrich is to revise said works, and carefully prepare them for publication, and said Tegg is to get copyrights for and publish the same, with cuts, maps, &c., as may be required, and said Tegg is to supply the market, and push the sales, and take all due measures to promote the success of said works.

"And in consideration of the premises, said Tegg agrees to pay said Goodrich, ten pounds sterling on every thousand copies printed of Parley's Tales of Animals, after the first edition (which consists of four thousand copies, and is nearly printed); and for each of the other works he agrees to pay said Goodrich five pounds on the delivery of the revised copy for the same, and five pounds for every thousand copies printed

of these works, which he agreed to publish, giving me a small consideration therefor. Four of these works I prepared on the spot, and after my return to America, prepared and forwarded ten others. Some time after, I learned that the books, or at least a portion of them, had been published in London, and were very successful. I wrote to Mr. Tegg several letters on the subject, but could get no reply.

Ten years passed away, and being in pressing need of all that I might fairly claim as my due, I went to London, and asked Mr. Tegg to render me an account of his proceedings, under the contract. I had previously learned, on inquiry, that he had indeed published four or five of the works as we had agreed, but taking advantage of these, which passed readily into extensive circulation, he proceeded to set aside the contract, and to get up a series of publications upon the model of those I had prepared for him, giving them, in the title-pages, the name of Parley, and passing them off upon the public, by every artifice in his power, as the genuine works of that

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after the first edition, and also a premium or bonus of five pounds on each work (in addition to the above stipulations), when four thousand copies are sold or disposed of, of the same.

"And when said Goodrich is out of the country, said Tegg is to furnish certificates of sales, &c., as may be required by said Goodrich or his agent. Said Tegg, it is understood, is not bound to publish any of these works which he deems unsuited to the country; but said Goodrich is at liberty to dispose of, to any other publisher, any work which said Tegg, on application, declines publishing.

"THOMAS TEGG,  
"S. G. GOODRICH."

"*London, June 30, 1832.*"

author. He had thus published over a dozen volumes, which he was circulating as "Peter Parley's Library." The speculation, as I was told, had succeeded admirably, and I was assured that many thousand pounds of profit had been realized thereby.

To my request for an account of his stewardship, Mr. Tegg replied, in general terms, that I was misinformed as to the success of the works in question; that, in fact, they had been a very indifferent speculation; that he found the original works were not adapted to his purpose, and he had consequently got up others; that he had created, by advertising and other means, an interest in these works, and had thus greatly benefited the name and fame of Parley, and, all things considered, he thought he had done more for me than I had for him; therefore, in his view, if we considered the account balanced, we should not be very far from a fair adjustment.

To this cool answer I made a suitable reply, but without obtaining the slightest satisfaction. The contract I had made was a hasty memorandum, and judicially, perhaps, of no binding effect on him. And besides, I had no money to expend in litigation. A little reflection satisfied me that I was totally at Tegg's mercy—a fact of which his calm and collected manner assured me he was even more conscious than myself. The discussion was not prolonged. At the second interview he cut the whole matter short, by saying—"Sir, I do not owe you a farthing; neither

justice nor law require me to pay you any thing. Still, I am an old man, and have seen a good deal of life, and have learned to consider the feelings of others as well as my own. I will pay you four hundred pounds, and we will be quits! If we can not do this, we can do nothing." In view of the whole case, this was as much as I expected, and so I accepted the proposition. I earnestly remonstrated with Mr. Tegg against the enormity of making me responsible for works I never wrote, but as to all actual claims on the ground of the contract, I gave him a receipt in full, and we parted.

Some years after this Mr. Tegg died, but his establishment passed into the hands of one of his sons, with another person, by whom it is still continued; the false "Parley's Library" having been recently enlarged by the addition of other counterfeits. An example so tempting and so successful as that I have described, was sure to be followed by others, and ere long many of the first publishers of juvenile works in London, had employed persons to write books under the name of Peter Parley—every thing being done in the title-pages, prefaces, advertisements, &c., to make the public receive them as genuine works.

## LETTER XLIX.

*The Peter Parley Books.*

MY DEAR C\*\*\*\*\*

It is not to be supposed that the annoyances arising from the falsification of the name of Parley, which I have just pointed out, have been the only obstacles which have roughened the current of my literary life. Not only the faults and imperfections of execution in my juvenile works—and no one knows them so well as myself—have been urged against them, but the whole theory on which they are founded has been often and elaborately impugned.

It is quite true that when I wrote the first half-dozen of Parley's Tales, I had formed no philosophy upon the subject. I simply used my experience with children in addressing them. I followed no models, I put on no harness of the schools, I pored over no learned examples. I imagined myself on the floor with a group of boys and girls, and I wrote to them as I would have spoken to them. At a later period I had reflected on the subject, and embodied in a few simple lines the leading principle of what seemed to me the true art of teaching children—and that is, to consider that their first ideas are simple and single, and formed of images of things palpable to the senses ; and hence

that these images are to form the staple of lessons to be communicated to them.\*

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## LETTER L.

*Journey to the South—Anecdotes—Reception at New Orleans.*

MY DEAR C\*\*\*\*\*

If thus I met with opposition, I had also my success, nay, I must say, my triumphs. My first patrons were the children themselves, then the mothers, and then, of course, the fathers. In the early part of the year 1846, I made a trip from Boston to the South, returning by the way of the Mississippi and the Ohio. I received many a kind welcome under the name of the fictitious hero whom I had made to tell my stories. Sometimes, it is true, I underwent rather sharp cross-questioning, and frequently was made to feel that I held my honors by a rather questionable title. I, who had undertaken to teach truth, was forced to confess that fiction lay at the foundation of my scheme! My innocent young readers, however, did not suspect me: they had taken all I had said as positively true, and I was of course Peter Parley himself.

“Did you really write that book about Africa?”

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\* NOTE BY THE PUBLISHER.—The remainder of this chapter is entirely devoted to the explanation of Mr. Goodrich's plan of writing books for children. At the time of the first publication of these *Recollections* the series of his *Peter Parley's Tales* were at the zenith of their popularity. However justifiable and proper it may have been at that time for the author to avail himself of the opportunity of defense against the attacks made against his theory of writing, and of exposing the numerous imitators who endeavored to sail upon the wings of his popularity, yet, now that a generation has passed away, and that Mr. Goodrich's writings for children, once so popular, have already almost passed into oblivion, these matters, to the present readers of these *Recollections*, are of comparatively little interest. They have, therefore, been excluded.



said a black-eyed, dark-haired girl of some eight years old, at Mobile.

I replied in the affirmative.

"And did you really get into prison, there?"

"No; I was never in Africa."

"Never in Africa?"

"Never."

"Well, then, why did you say you had been there?"

On another occasion, I think at Savannah, a gentleman called upon me, introducing his two grandchildren, who were anxious to see Peter Parley. The girl rushed up to me, and gave me a ringing kiss at once. We were immediately the best friends in the world. The boy, on the contrary, held himself aloof, and ran his eye over me, up and down, from top to toe. He then walked around, surveying me with the most scrutinizing gaze. After this, he sat down, and during the interview, took no further notice of me. At parting, he gave me a keen look, but said not a word. The next day the gentleman called and told me that his grandson, as they were on their way home, said to him—

"Grandfather, I wouldn't have any thing to do with that man: he ain't Peter Parley."

"How do you know that?" said the grandfather.

"Because," said the boy, "he hasn't got his foot bound up, and he don't walk with a crutch!"\*

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\* The little book entitled "*Parley's Method of Telling about Geography to Children*," had a picture, drawn by Tisdale, representing Parley

On my arrival at New Orleans I was kindly received, and had the honors of a public welcome. You will readily perceive the egotism implied in placing before you such a record as this ; but if I chronicle my failures and my trials, must I not, as a faithful scribe, tell you also of my success ?

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sitting in a chair, with his lame foot bound up, and a crutch at his side, while he is saying to the boys around—"Take care, don't touch my gouty toe ; if you do, I won't tell you any more stories !" Of this work two millions were sold, and of course Parley and his crutch were pretty generally associated together, in the minds of children.

## LETTER LI.

*Retrospection—Confessions—The mice among my papers—A reckoning with the past.*

MY DEAR C\*\*\*\*\*

In the three preceding letters I have spoken chiefly of the books I have written for children, and the true design of which was as much to amuse as to instruct them. These comprise the entire series called Parley's Tales, with many others, bearing Parley's name. As to works for education—school-books, including readers, histories, geographies, &c., books for popular reading, and a wilderness of prose and poetry, admitting of no classification—I have only to refer you to the catalogue already mentioned. Let me cheer you with the statement that this is the closing chapter of my literary history. I have little indeed to say, and that is a confession.

In looking at the long list of my publications, in reflecting upon the large numbers that have been sold, I feel far more of humiliation than of triumph. If I have sometimes taken to heart the soothing flatteries of the public, it has ever been speedily succeeded by the conviction that my life has been, on the whole, a series of mistakes, and especially in that portion of it which has been devoted to authorship. I have written too much, and have done nothing really

well. You need not whisper it to the public, at least until I am gone; but I know, better than any one can tell me, that there is nothing in this long catalogue that will give me a permanent place in literature. A few things may struggle upon the surface for a time, but—like the last leaves of a tree in autumn, forced at last to quit their hold, and cast into the stream—even these will disappear, and my name and all I have done will be forgotten.

A recent event, half ludicrous and half melancholy, has led me into this train of reflection. On going to Europe in 1851, I sent my books and papers to a friend, to be kept till my return. Among them was a large box of business documents—letters, accounts, receipts, bills paid, notes liquidated—comprising the transactions of several years, long since passed away. Shortly after my return to New York—some three months ago—in preparing to establish myself and family here, I caused these things to be sent to me. On opening the particular box just mentioned, I found it a complete mass of shavings, shreds, fragments. My friend had put it carefully away in the upper loft of his barn, and there it became converted into a universal mouse-nest! The history of whole generations of the mischievous little rogues was still visible; beds, galleries, play-grounds, birth-places, and even graves, were in a state of excellent preservation. Several wasted and shriveled forms of various sizes—the limbs curled up, the eyes extinct, the

teeth disclosed, the long, slender tails straight and stiffened—testified to the joys and sorrows of the races that had flourished here.

On exploring this mass of ruins, I discovered here and there a file of letters eaten through, the hollow cavity evidently having been the happy and innocent cradle of childhood, to these destroyers. Sometimes I found a bed lined with paid bills, and sometimes the pathway of a gallery paved with liquidated accounts. What a mass of thoughts, of feelings, cares, anxieties, were thus made the plunder of these thoughtless creatures! In examining the papers, I found, for instance, letters from N. P. Willis, written five and twenty years ago, with only "Dear Sir" at the beginning and "Yours truly" at the end. I found epistles of nearly equal antiquity signed N. Hawthorne, Catharine M. Sedgwick, Maria L. Child, Lydia H. Sigourney, Willis Gaylord Clark, Grenville Mellen, William L. Stone, J. G. C. Brainard—sometimes only the heart eaten out, and sometimes the whole body gone.

For all purposes of record, these papers were destroyed. I was alone, for my family had not yet returned from Europe; it was the beginning of November, and I began to light my fire with these relics. For two whole days I pored over them, buried in the reflections which the reading of the fragments suggested. Absorbed in this dreary occupation, I forgot the world without, and was only conscious of

bygone scenes which came up in review before me. It was as if I had been in the tomb, and was reckoning with the past. How little was there in all that I was thus called to remember—save of care, and struggle, and anxiety; and how were all the thoughts, and feelings, and experiences, which seemed mountains in their day, leveled down to the merest grains of dust! A note of hand—perchance of a thousand dollars—what a history rose up in recollection as I looked over its scarcely legible fragments: what clouds of anxiety had its approaching day of maturity cast over my mind! How had I been with a trembling heart to some bank-president\*—he a god, and I a craven worshiper—making my offering of some other note for a discount, which might deliver me from the wrath to come! With what anxiety have I watched the lips of the oracle—for my fate was in his hands! A simple monosyllable—yes or no—might save or ruin me. What a history was in that bit of paper—and yet it was destined only to serve as stuffing for the beds of vermin! Such are the agonies, the hopes, and fears of the human heart, put into the crucible of time!

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\* Let no one say that I speak irreverently of bank-presidents. One of my best friends during many years of trial was Franklin Haven, president of the Merchants' Bank at Boston—who found it in his heart, while administering his office with signal ability and success, to collect a library, cultivate letters, learn languages, and cherish a respect for literary men. It must be one among other sources of gratification, arising from his liberal tastes, that he long enjoyed the confidence and friendship of Daniel Webster.

I ought, no doubt, to have smiled at all this—but I confess it made me serious. Nor was it the most humiliating part of my reflections. I have been too familiar with care, conflict, disappointment, to mourn over them very deeply, now that they were passed; the seeming fatuity of such a mass of labors as these papers indicated, compared with their poor results—however it might humble, it could not distress me. But there were many things suggested by these letters, all in rags as they were, that caused positive humiliation. They revived in my mind the vexations, misunderstandings, controversies of other days; and now, reviewed in the calm light of time, I could discover the mistakes of judgment, of temper, of policy, that I had made. I turned back to my letter-book; I reviewed my correspondence—and I came to the conclusion that in almost every difficulty which had arisen in my path, even if others were wrong, I was not altogether right: in most cases, prudence, conciliation, condescension, might have averted these evils. Thus the thorns which had wounded me and others too, as it seemed, had generally sprung up from the seeds I had sown, or had thriven upon the culture my own hands had unwisely, perhaps unwittingly bestowed.

At first I felt disturbed at the ruin which had been wrought in these files of papers. Hesitating and doubtful, I consigned them one by one to the flames. At last the work was complete; all had perished, and



the feathery ashes had leaped up in the strong draft of the chimney and disappeared forever. I felt a relief at last; I smiled at what had happened; I warmed my chill fingers over the embers; I felt that a load was off my shoulders. "At least"—said I in my heart—"these things are now past; my reckoning is completed, the account is balanced, the responsibilities of those bygone days are liquidated. Let me burden my bosom with them no more!" Alas, how fallacious my calculation! A few months only had passed, when I was called to contend with a formidable claim which came up from the midst of transactions, to which these extinct papers referred, and against which they constituted my defence. As it chanced, I was able to meet and repel it by documents which survived, but the event caused me deep reflection. I could not but remark that, however we may seek to cover our lives with forgetfulness, their records still exist, and these may come up against us when we have no vouchers to meet the charges which are thus presented. Who then will be our helper? "I will think of that—I will think of that!"

## LETTER LII.

*Speech at St. Albans—Lecture upon Ireland and the Irish—The Broad-street Riot—Burning the Charlestown Convent—My Political Career—A. H. Everett—The Fifteen Gallon Jug—The Harrison Campaign of 1840—Hard Cider and Log Cabins—Universal Bankruptcy—Election of Harrison—His Death—Consequences—Anecdotes—The Small Tuil Movement—A Model Candidate—William Cpp, or Shingling a Barn.*

MY DEAR C\*\*\*\*\*

The first public speech I ever made was at St. Albans, England, in June, 1832, at a grand celebration of the passage of the Reform Bill,\* having accompanied thither Sir Francis Vincent, the represen-

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\* The Reform Bill was a popular measure, which swept away the rotten boroughs, and greatly extended the suffrage. After a long and violent struggle, it passed the House of Lords on the 4th of June, 1832, and received the royal sanction on the 7th. That day I arrived in Liverpool, amid a general feeling of joy and exhilaration. The Duke of Wellington had protested against the bill, though the king, William IV., and the ministry had favored it; in consequence, he was insulted by a mob, while passing on horseback through one of the streets of London, June 18th, the anniversary of the battle of Waterloo. A few days after this, there was a military review in Hyde Park, and King William being present, a large concourse of people assembled; among them was the Duke of Wellington. After the review was over, he was encircled by an immense mass of persons, indignant at the insult he had received, and desirous of testifying their respect and affection. Most of them condemned his opposition to the reform bill, but this could not extinguish or diminish their sense of his great merit. I was present, and moved on at the side of the old veteran, mounted on horseback and dressed as a citizen—his hat off, and testifying by his looks, his sensibility to these spontaneous marks of regard. He was conducted to the gate of the park, near his residence—Apsley House, and there he bade adieu to his shouting escort.

On this occasion, as well as on others, I saw King William IV., a large,

tative in Parliament of that ancient borough. More than three thousand people, men, women, and children, gathered from the town and the vicinity, were feasted at a long table, set out in the principal street of the place. After this feast there were various sports, such as donkey races, climbing a greased pole, and the like. At six o'clock, about one hundred and fifty of the gentry and leading tradesmen and mechanics, sat down to a dinner, Sir Francis presiding. The President of the United States was toasted, and I was called upon to respond. Entirely taken by surprise, for not a word had been said to me upon the subject, I made a speech. I could never recall what I said: all I remember is a whirl of thoughts and emotions as I rose, occasional cries of "hear! hear!" as I went on, and a generous clapping of hands as

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red-faced man, with an amiable, though not very intellectual expression. He was, however, very popular, and in contrast to George IV., who was exceedingly disliked during the latter part of his reign, he was a favorite with the people, who gave him the title of the "patriot king."

As I shall have no other opportunity, I may as well complete my gallery of British sovereigns, by a brief notice of Queen Victoria, whom I have often seen. Of her character I have already spoken; as to her personal appearance, all the world have a general idea of it, from the portraits in the shop-windows; but truth compels me to declare that all the personal beauty in these representations, is ideal. Her majesty is really a very ordinary and rather coarse-looking woman—especially to one whose standard is founded upon the delicate and graceful type of American female beauty. When I say she is as good as she is homely, and is loved and cherished by her people according to her merits, I give strong testimony to her virtues. Prince Albert is a very handsome man, and it must be said that the large family of princes and princesses not only resemble him, strikingly, but share in his personal good looks. I have seen few more gratifying sights in England than this royal family—deserving and receiving the affection of the people.

I wound off. Whether this last was because I really made a good hit, or from another principle—

“The best of Graham’s speeches was *his last*”—

I am totally unable to say.

My next public appearance was in a lecture at the Tremont Temple, in Boston—my subject being Ireland and the Irish. Although my discourse was written, and pretty well committed to memory, yet for several days before the time appointed for its delivery arrived—when I thought of my engagement, my heart rolled over with a heavy and sinking sensation. When the hour came, I went to the door of the room, but on seeing the throng of persons collected, I felt that my senses were deserting me: turning on my heel, I went out, and going to Smith, the apothecary—fortified myself with some peppermint lozenges. When I got back, the house was waiting with impatience. I was immediately introduced to the audience by Dr. Walter Channing, and stepping upon the platform, began. After the first sentence, I was perfectly at my ease. I need only add that I repeated the same lecture more than forty times.\*

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\* About this time there was a strong popular excitement in Boston and the vicinity against the Irish, and especially the Roman Catholic religion. It manifested itself in what was called the “Broad-street Riot”—June 11, 1839—in which the Irish, who gathered in that quarter, were attacked, their houses rifled, their beds ripped open, and the furniture destroyed to the amount of two thousand dollars; and also in burning down the Catholic Female Seminary—a species of Convent, where it was said there were evil doings—in the adjacent town of Charlestown. My purpose was to allay this excitement by presenting

In the autumn of 1836 there was a large evening party at Jamaica Plain, at the house of Mrs. G . . . . ., the lady patroness of the village. Among the notables present was Daniel Webster, whom I had frequently seen, but to whom I was now introduced for the first time. He spoke to me of many things, and at last of politics, suggesting that the impending presidential election involved most important questions, and he deemed it the duty of every man to reflect upon the subject, and to exert his influence as his conscience might dictate.

Since my residence in Massachusetts, a period of nearly eight years, I had been engrossed in my business, and had never even cast a vote. Just at this time I was appointed, without any suggestion of my own, one of the delegates to the whig convention to nominate a person to represent us—the Ninth Congressional District—in Congress. This was to take place at Medway, at the upper end of the district. I went accordingly, and on the first ballot, was the highest candidate, save one—Mr. Hastings, of Mendon. I declined of course, and he was unanimously nominated.

The canvass that ensued was a very animated one,

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the history of the Irish people, with the adversities they had suffered, and the many amiable and agreeable traits that had survived, amid all the causes which had operated to degrade them. I believe that my efforts were not wholly fruitless: the lecture was encouraged, and when printed, received a commendatory notice even from the North American Review—written by T. C. Grattan, himself an Irishman.

Mr. Van Buren being the democratic candidate for the presidency. He was considered as the heir-apparent of the policy of Gen. Jackson, and had indeed promised, if elected, to walk in the footsteps of his illustrious predecessor. Without the personal popularity of that remarkable man, he became the target for all the hostility which his measures had excited. He was, however, elected, but to be overwhelmed with a whirlwind of discontent and opposition four years after.

The candidate for Congress in our district in opposition to Mr. Hastings, was Alexander H. Everett, who had been hitherto a conspicuous whig, and who had signalized himself by the ability and the bitterness of his attacks on Gen. Jackson and his administration. He had singled out Mr. Van Buren for especial vehemence of reproach, because, being Secretary of State at the time, Mr. Everett was superseded as Minister to Spain without the customary courtesy of an official note advising him of the appointment of his successor. To the amazement of the public in general and his friends in particular, on the 8th January, 1836, Mr. Everett delivered an oration before the democracy of Salem, in which—ignoring the most prominent portion of his political life—he came out with the warmest eulogies upon Gen. Jackson and his administration! About the first of May, the precise period when it was necessary, in order to render him eligible to Congress in the Ninth District, he took up



his residence within its precincts, and, as was easily foreseen, was the democratic candidate for Congress.

The whig district committee, of which I was one, and Charles Bowen, Mr. Everett's publisher, another—issued a pamphlet, collating and contrasting Mr. Everett's two opinions of General Jackson's policy, and especially of Mr. Van Buren—the one flatly contradicting the other, and, in point of date, being but two or three years apart. This was circulated over the towns of the district. It was a terrible document, and Mr. Everett felt its force. One of them was left at his own door in the general distribution. This he took as a personal insult, and meeting Bowen, knocked him over the head with his umbrella. Bowen clutched him by the throat, and would have strangled him but for the timely interference of a bystander.

I had been among Mr. Everett's personal friends, but he now made me the object of special attack. A paper, then conducted by B. F. H...., circulated a good deal in the district, and here, under the name of Peter Parley, I was severely lashed, not because I was a candidate for office, but because I was chairman of the whig district committee. I recollect that one day some rather scandalous thing came out against me in the editorial columns of this journal, and feeling very indignant, I went to see the editor. I did not know him personally, but from occasionally reading his paper, I had got the idea that he was a



very monster of violence and vandalism. He was not at the office, but such was my irritation and impatience that I went to his house. I rang, and a beautiful black-eyed girl, some eight years old, came to the door. I asked if Mr. H. was in? "Mother," said the child, in a voice of silver, "is father at home?" At this moment another child, and still younger—its bullet-pate all over curls—came to the door. Then a mild and handsome woman came, and to my inquiry she said that her husband was out, but would return in a few moments.

My rage was quelled in an instant. "So," said I to myself, "these children call that man father, and this woman calls him husband. After all, he can not be such a monster as I have conceived him—with such a home." I turned on my heel and went away, my ill-humor having totally subsided. Some two years after, I told this anecdote to Mr. H., and we had a good-humored laugh over it. Both of us had learned to discriminate between political controversy and personal animosity.

The attacks made upon me during this canvass had an effect different from what was intended. I was compelled to take an active part in the election, and deeming the success of my party essential to my own defense, I naturally made more vigorous efforts for that object. Mr. Everett was largely defeated, and the whig candidate as largely triumphed. At the same time I was chosen a member of the legislature for Roxbury

—Jamaica Plain, where I resided, being a parish of that town. The next year I was a candidate for the senate, in competition with Mr. Everett,\* and was elected. In this manner I was forced into politics, and was indebted mainly to opposition for my success.

During the ensuing session of the legislature, the winter of 1837-8, the famous "Fifteen Gallon Law" was passed—that is, a law prohibiting the sale of intoxicating liquors in less quantities than fifteen gallons. The county I represented was largely in favor of the measure, and I voted for it, though I was by no means insensible to the agitation it was certain to produce. I had determined not to be a candidate for

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\* Alexander H. Everett was a native of Massachusetts, and a younger brother of Edward Everett, born in 1790. He studied law in the office of John Quincy Adams at Boston, and in 1809 he accompanied him as attaché in his mission to Russia. Mr. Everett's political career clearly displays the influence of this early connection with Mr. Adams. Having remained at St. Petersburg two years, he returned to the United States by way of England, where he spent some months. He now took part with the democrats, and wrote against the Hartford Convention and in favor of the war. Soon after the peace he was appointed secretary of legation to Governor Eustis, in his mission to the Netherlands. Here he continued several years, the latter part of the time as chargé. On visiting Brussels in 1824, I called upon him, and was agreeably impressed by his fine person and dignified, though cold and distant, manners. In 1825, he was appointed by his former patron, then President of the United States, Minister to Spain, where he remained till he was dismissed by Gen. Jackson. Mr. Everett, having failed of success in his attempts to obtain office from the people of Massachusetts, was employed by the general government, first as Commissioner to Cuba, and afterward to China. He died a few months subsequent to his arrival at Canton—that is, in June, 1847. In literature, he held a respectable position, having written several works of learning and ability, and some essays of great elegance. In politics, unfortunately, he followed the example of Mr. Adams, in a sudden and startling change of his party, under circumstances which injured his character and impaired his usefulness.

re-election, and therefore considered myself free to engage in the discussion which preceded the next election, and which, of course, mainly turned upon this law. Among other things, I wrote a little pamphlet, entitled "Five Letters to my Neighbor Smith, touching the Fifteen Gallon Jug"—the main design of which was to persuade the people of Massachusetts to make the experiment, and see whether such a restraint upon the sale of intoxicating drinks would not be beneficial. This was published anonymously, and my intention was to have the authorship remain unknown. It, however, had an enormous sale—a hundred thousand copies—in the course of a few months, and curiosity soon guessed me out.

Now in the village of Jamaica Plain, I had a neighbor, though not by the name of Smith—a rich liquor dealer, who did his business in Boston—a very respectable man, but a vehement opposer of the Fifteen Gallon Law. As the election approached, the citizens of the State were drawn out in two camps, the men of Israel—those in favor of prohibition—on one side, and the Philistines—the men in favor of free liquor—on the other. My neighbor was rather the Goliath of his party—six cubits and a span, and all helmeted in brass—by which I mean that he was the wealthiest, the most respectable, and the most valiant of all the soldiers of the Philistine camp! He insisted that by "My Neighbor Smith," I meant him, and though I had said nothing disagreeable of that per-

sonage, but, on the contrary, had drawn his portrait in very amiable colors, he held that it was a malicious personal attack. In vain did I deny the charge, and point to the fact that the residence, character, qualities of my fictitious hero, were inapplicable to him. Anxious, like Mawworm, to be persecuted, he insisted upon it that he was persecuted.

At the county convention, which took place some two months prior to this election, I declined being a candidate. The members present, however, clearly discerning the gathering storm, refused to release me, and I was forced to accept the nomination. The election was to take place on Monday, in November. On the Saturday previous, there was issued in Boston a pamphlet, entitled the "Cracked Jug," a personal and political attack upon me, written with great malice and some ability. It was scattered like snow-flakes all over the county, and was, I suspect, the Sunday reading of all the tipplers and taverners of the county. The bar-room critics esteemed it superior to any thing which had appeared since the letters of Junius, and of course considered me as annihilated.

On Monday, election-day, my family were insulted in the streets of Jamaica Plain, and as I went into the town-hall to cast my vote, I heard abundance of gibes cast at me from beneath lowering beavers. The result was that there was no choice of senators in the county. The election, when the people had thus failed to fill their places, fell upon the legislature, and

I was chosen. The storm gradually passed away. The fifteen gallon law was repealed, but it nearly overturned the whig party in the State, which, being in the majority, was made responsible for it.\* I deemed it necessary to reply to my Neighbor Smith's Cracked Jug, and he rejoined. What seemed at the time a deadly personal struggle, was ere long forgotten—neither party, I believe, carrying, in his character or his feelings, any of the scars inflicted during the battle. Both had in some sort triumphed—both

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\* In this election, Edward Everett, who had been governor of the State since 1835, and had administered the government with great success, was defeated by a single vote, Marcus Morton, a judge of the Supreme Court, and who had been the standing democratic candidate for many years without any seeming prospect of success, being chosen in his place. It is an interesting fact that such is the respect for the ballot, that among a hundred thousand votes, a majority of one was submitted to without question or opposition. A good anecdote is connected with this incident. Governor Morton with his party had opposed the encouragement of railroads by the use of the State credit. Nevertheless, while he was governor, the branch railroad, running through his own town, Taunton, to the thriving and enterprising town of New Bedford, was completed. This event was to be celebrated by a jubilee at the latter place, and the governor was invited to be present. The ceremonies were to commence at twelve o'clock, but at that hour his excellency had not arrived. The whole proceedings were delayed and embarrassed, until just as the clock was striking one, the governor appeared. J. H. Clifford, the witty and eloquent State's attorney, so universally known for his admirable management of the trial of Dr. Webster, the murderer of Parkman, and afterward himself governor of the State, immediately rose and offered the following sentiment—

*Governor Morton, who always gets in by one!*

It is needless to say that the sentiment, as well as the governor, was hailed with acclamation; and it may be stated incidentally, that, inasmuch as a railroad had passed through the governor's own town, he, and I may add his party, thenceforward were advocates of railroads. The next year (1840), in the whirlwind of the Harrison campaign, Governor Morton gave place to "honest John Davis," a name known and honored throughout the whole United States.

in some sort been beaten—both could, therefore, afford to return to the amicable relations of village neighborhood.

The presidential canvass of 1840 presented the most remarkable political spectacle which has ever been witnessed in the United States. Gen. Jackson's measures in regard to the currency and the tariff resulted in a tempest, which was precipitated upon the administration of his successor—Mr. Van Buren. Bankruptcy\* and ruin had swept over the country, involving alike the rich and the poor, in their avalanche of miseries. In the autumn of this year, the whigs nominated William Henry Harrison, as the candidate for the presidency, in opposition to Mr. Van Buren. He

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\* The bankruptcies that took place in Boston from November 1, 1836, to May 12, 1837, were one hundred and sixty-eight—some of very large amount. About the same time, the crash in New York was terrific, bearing down many of the oldest and wealthiest houses in the city. In New Orleans, in May, 1837, the failures in two days, amounted to twenty-seven millions of dollars. A committee of New York, addressing the President, stated that the depreciation of real estate in that city was forty millions of dollars in six months! They also stated that two hundred and fifty failures took place in the space of two months; that the depreciation of local stocks was twenty millions, and the fall of merchandise thirty per cent. within the same period. Twenty thousand persons, dependent upon their labor, were said to be thrown out of employment, at the same time. The committee added, "the error of our rulers has produced a wider desolation than the pestilence which depopulated our streets, or the conflagration which laid them in ashes." Similar ruin visited every part of the Union—the people, corporations, States, being reduced to bankruptcy. It was estimated that half a million of persons were made bankrupt by reason of the various measures of the Jackson and Van Buren administrations. Hundreds and thousands of persons, destitute of employment, and almost destitute of bread, found relief in swelling the Harrison processions and gatherings, in singing patriotic songs, and shouting for reform.



had held various civil and military trusts, in which he had displayed courage, wisdom, and patriotism. His personal character was eminently winning to the people, being marked with benevolence and simplicity. He had long retired from public life, and for several years had lived as a farmer on the "North Bend" of the Ohio, near Cincinnati. The democrats ridiculed him as drinking hard cider and living in a log cabin. The masses, resenting this as coming from those who—having the government spoils—were rioting in the White House on champagne, took these gibes, and displayed them as their mottoes and symbols upon their banners. They gathered in barns, as was meet for the friends of the farmer of North Bend, using songs and speeches as flails, threshing his enemies with a will. The spirit spread over mountain and valley, and in every part of the country, men were seen leaving their customary employments to assemble in multitudinous conventions. Many of these gatherings numbered twenty thousand persons.

During this animated canvass, I was not a candidate for office, yet I took part in the great movement, and made about a hundred speeches in Massachusetts and Connecticut. Everybody, then, could make a speech,\* and everybody could sing a song. Orators

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\* A speechmaker, in the western part of the State of Virginia luring the canvass, has given us the following anecdote. He was holding forth upon the merits of Gen. Harrison, and especially upon his courage, tact, and success as a military commander. While in the midst of his discourse, a tall, gaunt mau—who was probably a schoolmaster in



sprang up like mushrooms, and the gift of tongues was not more universal than the gift of music. Towns, cities, and villages, were enlivened with torch-light processions and with long, bannered phalanxes, shouting for the hero of Tippecanoe! The result of the election was such as might have been anticipated—a most emphatic rebuke by the people of that policy which had spread disaster and ruin over the country—by the election of Harrison, giving him two hundred and thirty-four votes, leaving only sixty for Van Buren! The death of Harrison, however, which took place thirty days after he had en-

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those parts—arose from the crowd, and said, in a voice which penetrated the whole assembly—

“Mister—Mister! I want to ax you a question.” To this the orator assented, and the man went on as follows:

“We are told, fellow-citizens, that General Harrison is a mighty great general; but I say he’s one of the very meanest sort of generals. We are told here to-night, that he defended himself bravely at Fort Meigs; but I tell you that on that occasion he was guilty of the *Small Tail Movement*, and I challenge the orator here present to deny it!”

The speaker declared his utter ignorance of what the intruder meant by “Small Tail Movement.”

“I’ll tell you,” said the man; “I’ve got it here in black and white. Here is Grimshaw’s History of the United States”—holding up the book—“and I’ll read what it says: ‘At this critical moment, Gen. Harrison executed a *novel* movement!’ Does the gentleman deny that?”

“No: go on.”

“Well, he executed a *novel* movement. Now, here’s Johnson’s dictionary”—taking the book out of his pocket and holding it up—“and here it says: ‘NOVEL—a *small tale*!’ And this was the kind of movement Gen. Harrison was guilty of. Now, I’m no soger, and don’t know much of military tictacks—but this I do say: a man who, in the face of an enemy, is guilty of a *Small Tail Movement*, is not fit to be President of the United States, and he shan’t have my vote!”

The relator of the anecdote says that it was quite impossible for him to overcome the effect of this speech, and we are left to conclude that the vote of that vicinity was given to Van Buren.

tered upon the duties of his office, with consequent divisions among the leading members of the whig party at Washington, deprived the country of nearly the whole benefit due to a change so emphatically pronounced by the voice of the people.

From this period, I have taken no active part in politics. In reviewing the past—while duly appreciating the honor conferred by the confidence bestowed upon me by the citizens who gave me their suffrages, I still regard my political career as an unprofitable, nay, an unhappy episode, alien to my literary position and pursuits, and every way injurious to my interests and my peace of mind. It gave me painful glimpses into the littleness, the selfishness, the utter charlatanism\* of a large portion of those politicians who lead, or seem to lead, the van of parties; and who, pretending to be guided by patriotism, are

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\* For example: while I was in the Senate, and the Fifteen Gallon prohibitory law was under discussion, many people came into the lobby to listen to the debates, which excited great interest. Among these was a very respectable man from my own county of Norfolk. He asked me how I was going to vote. I replied that I had hardly made up my mind, and asked his opinion as to what I ought to do. He strongly enjoined it upon me to vote for the measure, saying that the public mind generally was prepared for it, and that in our county, especially, the sentiment in favor of it was overwhelming. And yet, at the next election this very man was a candidate against me, *on the ground that he was in favor of the repeal of the law*. He insisted that it was an extreme measure; and although he was a temperance man—God forbid that he should be any thing else—he still thought it would do harm to the good cause! Therefore he contended for its repeal, and the substitution of some milder course! This man was a type of a very numerous class, whose principles fluctuate with the tide of public opinion, and the chances which arise for riding into office.

usually only riding issues, principles, platforms, as servile hobbies which may carry them into office. As some compensation for this, it has also led me to a conviction that the great mass of the people are governed by patriotic motives—though even with these I often noted curious instances in which the public interests were forgotten in a desire to achieve some selfish or sinister end.\*

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\* About these days, in a certain town not far from Boston, there was a large family, of several generations, by the name of Cpp. At one of the elections for members to represent the place in the General Court, it appeared that among the votes distributed at the polls were a large number for William Cpp, and the whole family were present, like swarming bees, actively engaged in promoting his election. One of them came up to the person who told me the story, and asked him to vote for William. He naturally desired to know the reason for such a measure, and the more particularly as he had never heard of any peculiar claims or qualifications, for the office in question, which the said William possessed. "Well," said the Cpp, "I'll tell you how 'tis. William's got a little behindhand, and wants to shingle his barn. This will cost about a hundred dollars. Now, if he can go to the General Court one session, he'll save a hundred dollars, and so, you see, he can shingle his barn!" I have seen a good deal of this barn-shingling, even in New England.

## LETTER LIII.

*International copyright—Mr. Dickens's Mission—His Failure.*

MY DEAR C\*\*\*\*\*

In the winter of 1842, Mr. Charles Dickens arrived in Boston, where he was received with open arms. A complimentary dinner\* was got up for him, and fine speeches were made by many of the first citizens, all in a strain of welcome to the distinguished stranger. The ball thus set in motion rolled over the country, and wherever Mr. Dickens went, he was received in a similar manner—that is, with welcome, with feasting, with compliments. I remember

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\* This dinner took place on the 1st of February, 1842. It was deemed a matter of sufficient importance to have the whole proceedings—speeches, letters, and toasts—reported, and published in a book. In the light of the present day, many of these—though sparkling with wit and good feeling—are rather calculated to make us regret the whole occasion. The strain of compliment was excessive; it set an example which, in this respect, was copied elsewhere—and the object of all this blunt adulation, as we now know, laughed at it in his sleeve at the time, and openly afterward, when he had got safe back to England. This should be a lesson to us for all future time. Foreigners will judge us somewhat according to their own standard. They regard all excessive demonstrations of the kind here alluded to as proceeding either from snobbery, or a desire to exhibit themselves, on the part of the leaders. They are, therefore, rather disgusted than conciliated by these overdone attentions.

to have seen him at one of the President's levees at Washington, there being many distinguished guests present—Washington Irving, the Earl of Carlisle, &c. These were totally neglected, while a crowd of curious and admiring followers, forming a gorgeous train of fair women and brave men, glittered behind Mr. and Mrs. Dickens. They were, in truth, the observed of all observers.

It appeared in the sequel, that the author of Pickwick had crossed the Atlantic for a double purpose—to write a book, and to obtain international copyright. In the first he succeeded, in the latter he failed. Since that time, however, the subject of international copyright has been a theme of animated discussion in this country, and has even been made a matter of diplomatic conference between Great Britain and the United States.

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NOTE BY THE PUBLISHER.—Here follows a history of copyright, an argument in favor of international copyright, and a long account of a scheme of international copyright which was at that time propounded. Since the first publication of these *Recollections* many and various schemes for the bringing about of international copyright have been suggested, and the subject has been very fully discussed in the newspapers. Mr. Goodrich argues, as might be expected of an author of his extended popularity, very strongly in favor of the establishment of international copyright; but, in view of the frequent and extended discussion that has been devoted to this subject elsewhere, there is no reason for reproducing in the present edition the twenty odd pages which are devoted by the author in his first edition to the various arguments in favor of the scheme.

## LETTER LIV.

*Statistics of the Book Trade—Its Extension—The Relative Increase of American Literature, as compared with British Literature.*

MY DEAR C\*\*\*\*\*

In my last letter I presented to you some suggestions respecting International Copyright. In doing this I have naturally gathered up my recollections of the book trade in the United States for the last forty years, and compared the past with the present. I am so impressed with certain prominent and remarkable results and inferences, that I deem it proper to present them to you. These may be grouped under two general heads :

1. The great extension of the book production in the United States.

2. The large and increasing relative proportion of American works.

Unfortunately we have no official resources for exact statistics upon this subject. The general fact of a vast development in all the branches of industry connected with the press, is palpable to all persons having any knowledge on the subject ; but the details upon which this is founded, and the precise degree of increase, are to a considerable extent matters of conjecture. Nevertheless, there are some facts within our reach, and by the grouping of these, we

may approach the results we seek, with a sufficient degree of certainty, for all practical purposes.

I. *As to the extension of the book manufacture.*


THE BOOK PRODUCTION OR MANUFACTURE IN 1820.

Let us go back to the year 1820, and endeavor to estimate the gross amount of this trade in the United States at that period. The following statement, it is supposed, may approach the truth:

Amount of books manufactured and sold in the United States in 1820.

School books.....	\$750,000
Classical books .....	250,000
Theological books.....	150,000
Law books .....	200,000
Medical books.....	150,000
All others.....	1,000,000

Gross amount ..... \$2,500,000


 The space between 1820 and 1830 may be considered as the period in which our national literature was founded; it was the age in which Irving, Cooper, Bryant, Halleck, Paulding, J. R. Drake, John Neal, Brainard, Percival, Hillhouse, and others, redeemed the country from the sneer that nobody read American books. During this period we began to have confidence in American genius, and to dream of literary ambition. The North American Review, already established, kept on its steady way, and other attempts were made in behalf of periodical literature, but with little success.

THE BOOK MANUFACTURE IN 1830.

If we take 1830 as a period for estimating the product of the book manufacture, we suppose it may stand thus:

School books.....	\$1,100,000
Classical books.....	350,000
Theological books .....	250,000
Law books.....	300,000
Medical books.....	200,000
All others.....	1,300,000

Gross amount ..... \$3,500,000

 This shows an increase of production of forty per cent. in ten years.



From 1830 to 1840 was an era of great and positive development, and the foundation of a still more active era of progress and expansion in the book trade. It may be considered as the point at which our literature became established in our own confidence, and to some degree, in the respect of the world. During this period, the following names either first appeared or became eminently conspicuous :

In History—Prescott, Sparks, Bancroft, Irving.

In Mathematics—Day, Farrar, and the self-taught Bowditch, whose translation of the *Mécanique Celeste* of Laplace, is admitted to be superior to the original, by reason of its happy illustrations and added discoveries.

In Philology—Webster, whose quarto Dictionary is now admitted by high British authority to take precedence of all others.

In Theology—Bush, Barnes, Norton, Stuart, Woods, Jenks, Robinson, Spring, A. Alexander, Durbin, Hodge, Bangs, Olin, L. Beecher, Tyng, Thornwell.

In Political Economy, Philosophy, &c.—H. C. Carey, Colton, Lieber, Wayland, Upham, Tucker.

In General Science, Natural History, &c.—Silliman, Henry, Morton, Rogers, Redfield, Espy, Audubon, Olmsted, Dana, Gray, Nuttall, Burritt.

In Jurisprudence, International Law, &c.—Kent, Story, Wheaton, Duer, Cowen.

In Medicine and Surgery—Dunglison, N. Smith, N. R. Smith, Bigelow, Dewees, Beck, Doane, Wood, Mott, Eberle.


In Travels, Geography, &c.—Schoolcraft, Ruschenberger, Stephens, Farnham.

In Essay and Criticism—Channing, the two Everetts, Emerson.

In Fiction—Cooper, Ware, Simms, Bird, Kennedy, Poe, Miss Sedgwick, Mrs. Child, Miss Leslie, Fay, Hoffman.

In Poetry—Bryant, Sprague, Pierpont, Dana, Willis, Longfellow, Whittier, Mrs. Sigourney, Mellen, Morris, McLellan, Prentice, Benjamin.

In Educational and Church Music—Lowell Mason, probably the most successful author in the United States.

 This period is to be noted for the effective labors of W. C. Woodbridge, James G. Carter, Horace Mann, Henry Barnard, and others, in behalf of common-school education, and an immense improvement in school-books, both in literary and mechanical execution, by means of which geography, grammar, and history, very extensively became common school studies. During the same period, history, chemistry, natural philosophy, moral philosophy, rhetoric, geology, were all popularized, and introduced into the public high-schools. The change in school-books during this period amounted to a revolution, and resulted in that amazing expansion in their use and distribution, which now marks the subject of education in the United States. This also was the era of *Annuals*, which added largely to the amount of the book-trade.


This is the era of the establishment of the Penny Press, which is at once a sign and instrument of progress. Its home is in the midst of business, education, literature—in the very breathing and heart-beating of life and action: and it gives impulse and vigor to all these interests. So powerful an instrument must sometimes seem to produce evil, but on the whole it must be regarded as a great civilizer. We may advert to a single illustration of its expanding influences: the three principal penny papers of New York, at the present day, 1856—the *Herald*, *Tribune*, and *Times*—each of them is a political paper, with political opinions, yet each treats politics as a matter of general information, and publishes the principal doings and documents of all parties. This is not so in any country where the penny press does not exist.

This is also the era in which monthly and semi-monthly Magazines began to live and thrive among us. Among the most noted, are the *Knickerbocker*, *Merchants' Magazine*, *Graham's*, *Southern Literary Messenger*, all continued to the present time, with others which have ceased to exist.

#### THE BOOK MANUFACTURE IN 1840.

The book production for 1840 may be estimated as follows:\*

School books .....	\$2,000,000
Classical books.....	550,000
Theological books .....	300,000
Law books.....	400,000
Medical books.....	250,000
All others.....	2,000,000
Gross amount.....	\$5,500,000

 This calculation shows an increase of about sixty per cent. for ten years.

From 1840 to 1850 was a period of general prosperity in the country, and the full impulse of the preceding period continued through this.

American authorship was more appreciated at home and abroad—a circumstance greatly due to the enlightened and patriotic labors of Dr. Griswold, who may be considered as among the first and most influential of our authors in cultivating a respect for our own literature. New American publications became very numerous during this period; the style of book manufacture was greatly improved; numerous magazines were

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\* The following is a table of estimates of the various Industrial Interests connected with the press, presented to Congress in behalf of the Convention which met at Boston in 1842. Mr. Tileston, of Dorchester, and myself were the committee appointed to proceed to Washington to enforce the wishes of the petitioners, founded upon this exhibition. Mr. Fillmore, the chairman of the Committee of Ways and Means, then

founded; the penny press was diffused, and became more elevated in its character and more enlarged in its scope—several of the editors connected with it marking the age by their sagacity, vigor, and largeness of view.

This era is also marked by the production of numerous works richly illustrated by steel and wood engravings. The Harpers entered upon the publication of handsome editions of books in all departments of literature, many of them embellished by fine wood engravings; the Appletons of New York, Butler of Philadelphia, and others, gave to the public those luxurious volumes, successors of the annuals, already alluded to. The success of these rich and costly works signalizes the advance of public taste. Putnam gives us Washington Irving's works in a guise suited to their excellence, and a little later, the Homes of American Authors, also in a style suited to the subject. About the same time the writers for the Knickerbocker present its veteran editor with a Memorial—an exquisite volume—as much a sign of the public appreciation as their own.

The immense development of the school-book trade is a feature of this era; we now see editions of five, ten, twenty thousand copies of geographies, grammars, spelling-books, readers. Spelling-books count by millions, and geographies by hundreds of thousands. The mechanical character of these works is changed; they have cast their brown-paper slough, and appear in the costly dress of fine paper, fine illustrations, and good binding. Twenty thousand dollars are paid for the getting up of a school geography!

charged with framing the Tariff bill which soon after passed into a law, gave us a patient hearing, and the views of the petitioners were duly considered and acceded to.

EMPLOYMENTS, &c.	No. of persons employed.	Amount of business annually.	No. of books, &c., annually produced.	Capital invested.
Publishing and Bookselling.	4,000	\$7,000,000	12,000,000 vols	4,000,000
Periodicals, exclusive of Newspapers .....	.....	500,000	3,000,000 Nos.	200,000
Bookbinders .....	3,060	1,646,000	.....	800,000
Type & Stereotype Found-ers .....	700	426,000	.....	400,000
Engraving, Wood, Steel, & Copper, includ. Designs }	500	250,000		
Plate Printing .....	500	400,000		
Newspapers .....	.....	6,000,000	{ 300,000,000 sheets ann'y.	2,200,000
Printing, including Newspapers .....	25,088	7,126,912	.....	3,000,000
Paper of all kinds used for printing .....	8,000	5,000,000	.....	5,000,000

At the present time, 1856, it will be safe to double most of these estimates, to represent the present state of the same interests.

Most of the authors which we have named as belonging to the preceding era, shed their luster upon this. Among those who now first entered the lists, we may name—

in History—Hildreth, Ingersoll, Eliot, Hawks, T. Irving, Frost, Headley, Abbott, Brodhead, Mrs. Willard, Lossing, C. A. Goodrich, and soon after, Motley, who, at the very outset, has attained a high reputation. In political history—Young, Benton.

In Jurisprudence—Greenleaf, George T. Curtis, W. W. Story, and soon after, B. R. Curtis, T. Parsons, Edwards, Dayton, Dean, E. F. Smith, Dunlap, Waterman, Willard.

Mathematics—Pierce, Davies, Courtenay, Millington, Hackley, Loomis.

Philology—Prof. C. A. Goodrich, editor of Webster's Dictionary; Worcester, Pickering.

Political Economy, Philosophy, &c.—E. P. Smith, Mahan, Tappan, Hickok.

Theology—Bushnell, Hawes, Cheever, Wainwright, Wines, Huntington, Spring, Wisner, J. A. Alexander, Taylor, McClintock, E. Beecher, Williams, Stevens, Fisk, Dowling, Cross, Conant, Choules.

Medicine and Surgery—J. C. Warren, Greene, Parker, Bartlett, Clymer, Drake, Pancoast, H. H. Smith, Harris, Carson; and since 1850, Bedford, Watson, Gross, Flint, Lee, Blackman.

General Science, Natural History, Geography, &c.—Agassiz and Guyot—whom we now claim as citizens; with Bartlett, Squiers, Maury, Mitchell, J. D. Dana, Baird, Hall, Emmons, Mahan, D. A. Wells, Wood, St. John, Wilkes—the latter giving us a new continent by discovery; Lynch, who has furnished the best account of the Dead Sea and its environs; and, we may add, Com. Perry, who introduces us to Japan.

In Classical Literature—Leverett, Anthon, Andrews, Gould, Brooks, McClintock, Owen, Kendrick, Sophocles, Johnson, Thacher.

Essay and Criticism—Prescott, Chapin, Giles, Sprague, Hague, Charles Sumner, Whipple, Palfrey, Winthrop, Beecher, Cheever, Milburn.

Travels, Geography, &c.—Catlin, Stephens, Curtis, Bayard Taylor, Bartlett, Willis, Southgate, Robinson, Olin, Kendall, Fremont, Kidder, Parkman, Coggeshall, Colton.

In light, racy writing, full of life-pictures and luscious fancies—Curtis, Cozzens, Mitchell, Bayard Taylor, Willis, Matthews, Baldwin.

In Miscellaneous Literature—Ticknor, Tuckerman, Longfellow, Griswold, Mrs. Child, Hall, Headley, Mrs. Kirkland, Grace Greenwood, Mrs. Ellet, Mrs. Hale, Seba Smith; and in 1856, E. A. and G. L. Duyckinck.

In Fiction—Melville, Kimball, Mayo, Mrs. Stowe, Miss Mackintosh, Alice Carey, Elizabeth Warner, Mrs. Southworth, Miss Wormley, Mrs. Oakes Smith, Minnie Myrtle.

In Poetry—Holmes, Lowell, Buchanan Read, Bayard Taylor, Saxe, Epes Sargent, W. R. Wallace, T. W. Parsons, Cranch, Fields.

Books of Practical Utility—Miss Catharine Beecher, Miss Leslie, Fanny Fern, G. P. Putnam, J. L. Blake, Downing, Haven, and many others.

It is not possible to give all the names of those who have distinguished themselves in Educational Manuals; among them, however, are the following: Mitchell, Olney, Smith, Morse, Willard, Monteith, McNally, Fitch, Miss Cornell, Mrs. Willard, in School Geographies; in Readers and Spellers, Emerson, Parker, Town, Saunders, Swan, Sargent, Tower, McGuffie, Cobb, Lovell; in Grammars, Kirkham, Clark, Brown, R. C. Smith, Weld, Wells, Dalton, Greene, Pineo; in Arithmetics, Emerson, Davies, Greenleaf, Thomson, Stoddard, R. C. Smith, Adams; in various other works, Hooker, Gallaudet, Comstock, Burritt, Mrs. Phelps, Page, Mansfield, H. N. Day, Boyd, Miss Dwight, Darley, Gillespie; in Maps and Atlases, Mitchell, J. H. Colton. The latter has in progress, and nearly completed, the best General Atlas ever published in any country.

#### THE BOOK MANUFACTURE IN 1850.

The era of 1850 affords the following estimates:

School books.....	\$5,500,000
Classical books .....	1,000,000
Theological books .....	500,000
Law books .....	700,000
Medical books .....	400,000
All other books.....	4,400,000

Gross amount.....\$12,500,000

This shows an advance of one hundred and twenty-five per cent. in ten years.

From 1850 to 1856, the momentum of preceding periods was reinforced by the quickening impulse of a host of female writers, whose success presents a marked phenomenon in the history of our literature at this time.

To this era belongs Mrs. Stowe, who, so far as the sale of her works is concerned, may be considered the most successful woman-writer ever known; Miss Warner, Fanny Fern, Mrs. Stephens, Miss Cummings, Marion Harland (Miss Hawes), and others, produce books of which twenty, thirty, forty, fifty thousand are sold in a year.

About this time is the successful era of monthly magazines, as Harpers', Putnam's, &c. The former outstrips all other works of the kind yet published, issuing one hundred and seventy thousand numbers a month!

The last ten years have been noted for the production of local, state, town, and city histories, as well as genealogical histories. Many of these are of great interest, going back to the lights and shadows of colonial periods. Here are the future resources of historic poetry and romance, of painting and sculpture.

During this period there have also been produced numerous valuable and costly works by the General Government, relating to navigation, geography, &c., and also local, State surveys, under State patronage, of great interest and utility.

During this period, pictorial-sheet literature is brought to a climax in every form, up to the blanket-folio. This is the age of vigorous advertising, by means of which "fifty thousand copies are sold before a book is printed."

This is also the millennial era of Spiritual Literature, which has now its periodicals, its presses, and its libraries.

It is also the climax of the Thrilling, Agonizing Literature, and which, by the way, is thus rather wickedly mocked by the poet of the "Fruit Festival" already alluded to:

"This is the new 'Sensation' Book—

A work of so much force

The first edition all blew up,

And smashed a cart and horse!

A friend who read the manuscript

Without sufficient care,

Was torn to rags, although he had

Six cables round his hair!

"'The Eggs of Thought' I'll recommend

As very thrilling lays;

Some poets poach—but here is one

That all the papers praise.

The school commissioners out West

Have ordered seventy tons,

That widely they may be dispersed

Among their setting suns!

"And here's a most Astounding Tale—

A volume full of fire;

The author's name is known to fame—

Stupendous Stubbs, Esquire!

And here's 'The Howling Ditch of Crime,'

By A. Sapphira Stress:

Two hundred men fell dead last night

A working at the press!"

#### THE BOOK MANUFACTURE IN 1856.

The amount of the production of our American book-trade at this time—that is, for the year 1856—may be estimated at about sixteen millions of dollars; and the annual increase of this interest at about a million of dollars a year.

This sum may be distributed as follows:



Produced in New York city in the year 1856.....	\$6,000,000
In other parts of the State—Albany, Schenectady, Utica, Syracuse, Cazenovia, Ithaca, Rochester, Auburn, Buffalo, &c.	600,000
In Boston.....	2,500,000
In other New England towns—New Haven, Hartford, Providence, Springfield, Northampton, Salem, Newburyport, Portland, Keene, &c.....	600,000
In Philadelphia.....	3,400,000

[The operations of the book-trade in this city are enormous, but a large amount of the books distributed from this point are manufactured elsewhere. The house of Lippincott, Grambo & Co. does a larger book business than any other in the world. They are very extensive publishers, but they often order whole editions of other houses.]

In Cincinnati.....	1,300,000
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[This city is less than a century old, from its first log-cabin; yet an excellent authority says: "In 1850 this western city, with a population of 116,000, has twelve publishing houses, which give employment to seven hundred people. The value of books and periodicals published here is \$1,250,000 a year. I consider that there is more reading of books in Ohio than in Germany. The chief works in demand are religious and educational."\*]

In the Northwestern States—Detroit, Chicago, Milwaukee...	100,000
In the District of Columbia—by the Government.....	750,000

The Southern and Southwestern States consume a considerable amount of books, though small in comparison to the rest of the United States. Their production of books and of literature is still less in proportion. Baltimore, Richmond, Charleston, Columbus, Savannah, Macon, Mobile, New Orleans, St. Louis, and Louisville, are considerable markets for the sale of books, and a few works are published in some of these places. In Baltimore and Louisville, the publishing interest is extensive. We may estimate the whole book production in this section at.....

750,000

Total in the United States.....\$16,000,000

*You will bear in mind that this estimate, throughout, regards only books manufactured in the United States; the amount of books imported is probably about a million of dollars a year. If so, the whole consumption of books in this country is probably not far from seventeen millions of dollars annually!*

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\* See the "Bibliographical Guide to American Literature" of Messrs. Trübner & Co., London—an interesting work, abounding in curious and startling yet gratifying facts, in respect to the literature of the United States.



Now, my dear C . . . , you must remember that the details of these estimates are not founded upon precise official statistics, but are only inferences from general facts tolerably well established. Considering these as estimates merely, they may still be such probable approximations to the truth as to give us a general view of the amount and movement of the book production of the United States. This, of course, leaves out the newspaper and periodical press, which circulates annually six millions of copies, and five hundred millions of separate numbers! I do not dilate upon the fact that we have two hundred colleges, a hundred thousand elementary schools, fifty theological seminaries, twenty law schools, forty medical schools, and that our public and school libraries number five millions of volumes;\* yet these are to be taken in connection with the tabular views I have given. Then, I ask, have we not a literature?

I now invite your attention to another topic:

II. *The large and increasing proportion of American productions—that is, productions of American mind—in the books published in the United States.*

Taking, as before, certain prominent facts as the basis of calculation, we arrive at the following conclusions:

In 1820, the book manufacture of the United States was based upon works of which thirty per cent. was the production of American authors, and seventy per cent. of British authors.

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\* See Trübner's Bibliographical Guide, before quoted, page xxvii. It is there estimated that in 1860 the public libraries will amount to ten millions of volumes.

☞ From 1820 to 1830, as we have seen, a considerable impulse was given to American literature, which now began sensibly to diminish the relative proportion of British works among us.

In 1830, the book production of the United States embraced forty per cent. of American works, and sixty per cent. of British works.

☞ From 1830 to 1840, still greater activity prevailed in American authorship, and school-books were extensively multiplied; we shall see, therefore, during this period, a corresponding relative increase of American works.

In 1840, we estimate the proportion of American works to be fifty-five per cent., and that of British works forty-five per cent.

☞ From 1840 to 1850 has been the most thriving era of American literature, and during this ten years we find that the balance has turned largely in favor of American works.

In 1850, we estimate the proportion of American works to be seventy per cent. and of British works to be thirty per cent.

In 1856, it is probable that the proportion of American works is eighty per cent. and that of British books twenty per cent.

☞ *It will be understood that we here speak of all new editions of every kind: of the works of living British authors, the proportion is much less than twenty per-cent.*

Some general observations should be made by way of explanation.

1. School-books constitute a very large proportion of the book product of the United States; probably thirty to forty per cent. of the whole. Sixty years ago we used English readers, spelling-books, and arithmetics; forty years ago we used English books adapted to our wants. Now our school-books are superior to those of all other countries, and are wholly by American authors. More than a million of Webster's Spelling-books are published every year. We produce annually more school-books than the whole continent of Europe!

2. The classical works in use, formerly altogether British, are now seven-eighths American.

3. The elementary treatises on law, medicine, theology, and science, are mostly American.

4. The dictionaries in general use are American.

5. The popular reading of the masses is three-fourths American.

6. Three-fourths of the new novels and romances are American.

7. The new foreign literature, reproduced among us, consists mainly of works of science, philosophy, jurisprudence, medicine and surgery, divinity, criticism, and general literature. Thirty per cent. of the works of

these classes—constituting the higher walks of literature generally—are of foreign origin.—*See Note II., p. 552, vol. ii.*

Now, not insisting upon the precise accuracy of these estimates, but still regarding them as approaches to the truth, we have the basis for some interesting observations.

Though, as an independent nation, we are less than a century old, and though we have been busily engaged in exploring wildernesses, in felling forests, founding States, building cities, opening roads; in laying down railways, in teaching steamboats to traverse the waters before only known to the Indian canoe; in converting lakes and rivers—the largest in the world—into familiar pathways of commerce, and as a consummation of our progress, in netting half a continent with lines of telegraph—still, we have found time, and courage, and heart, to outstrip all that the world has before seen, in the diffusion of knowledge, by means of the periodical press; in the number and excellence of our common schools; in the number, cheapness, and excellence of our books for elementary education.

Though not claiming comparison with the Old World in the multitude of new works of the highest class in literature and science, we have still made a good beginning, and have many readers in the other hemisphere, under the eaves of universities and colleges, which have been founded for centuries.

In the midst of the haste and hurry of life, induced

by the vast fields of enterprise around us and beckoning us on to the chase—we still find a larger portion of our people devoted to education, and reading, and meditation, and reflection, than is to be met with in any other land; as a corollary of this, we find, relatively, more hands, more purses, more heads and hearts, devoted to the support of literature and the dissemination of knowledge, than in any other country of equal population.

It is also to be observed that, after all that has been said and surmised as to the dependence of American literature upon the British press, that the element of British mind, in the production of American publications, is really but about twenty per cent., and this proportion is rapidly diminishing. Of the new books annually produced in the United States, not more than one-fifth part are either directly or indirectly of foreign origin.

It is, however, to be at the same time admitted and reflected upon, that our deficiency and our dependence lie chiefly in the higher efforts of mind and genius—those which crown a nation's work, and which confirm a nation's glory; and it is precisely here that we are now called upon, by every legitimate stimulus, to rouse the emulation, the ambition, the patriotism of our country.\* It is, as tributary to such

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\* "In order that America may take its due rank in the commonwealth of nations, a literature is needed which shall be the exponent of its higher life. We live in times of turbulence and change. There is a general dissatisfaction, manifesting itself often in rude contests and ruder

a consummation, that I would earnestly urge upon our people, and those whom they have placed in authority, to adopt the modified but still desirable measure of International Copyright, already suggested. Just at present this would be a little against us, that is to say, we should buy more copyrights of the British than they of us ; but, at the rate of progress hitherto attained by American literature, before twenty years—probably before ten years—are past, the

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- speech, with the gulf which separates principles from actions. Men are struggling to realize dim ideals of right and truth, and each failure adds to the desperate earnestness of their efforts. Beneath all the shrewdness and selfishness of the American character, there is a smouldering enthusiasm which flares out at the first touch of fire—sometimes at the hot and hasty words of party, and sometimes at the bidding of great thoughts and unselfish principles. The heart of the nation is easily stirred to its depths ; but those who rouse its fiery impulses into action are often men compounded of ignorance and wickedness, and wholly unfitted to guide the passions which they are able to excite. There is no country in the world which has nobler ideas embodied in more worthless shapes. All our factions, fanaticisms, reforms, parties, creeds, ridiculous or dangerous though they often appear, are founded on some aspiration or reality which deserves a better form and expression. There is a mighty power in great speech. If the sources of what we call our fooleries and faults were rightly addressed, they would echo more majestic and kindling truths. We want a poetry which shall speak in clear, loud tones to the people ; a poetry which shall make us more in love with our native land, by converting its ennobling scenery into the images of lofty thoughts ; which shall give visible form and life to the abstract ideas of our written constitutions ; which shall confer upon virtue all the strength of principle and all the energy of passion ; which shall disentangle freedom from cant and senseless hyperbole, and render it a thing of such loveliness and grandeur as to justify all self-sacrifice ; which shall make us love man by the new consecrations it sheds on his life and destiny ; which shall force through the thin partitions of conventionalism and expediency ; vindicate the majesty of reason ; give new power to the voice of conscience, and new vitality to human affection ; soften and elevate passion ; guide enthusiasm in a right direction ; and speak out in the high language of men to a nation of men.”

*E. P. Whipple.*

scales will be turned in our favor, and they will buy more copyrights of us than we shall of them. At all events, an immediate and powerful stimulus would be added to authorship, and to some of the trades and professions connected with the production of books in this country, if we could have the British market opened to us on some such plan as is herein proposed. Nearly every new work would be stereotyped, and a set of plates sent to England; and these, in view of the increased sale, and the high and improving standard of taste, abroad, would be got up in a superior manner, in all respects. Let us think well of these things!

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## LETTER LV.

*Recollections of Washington—The House of Representatives—Missouri Compromise—Clay, Randolph, and Lowndes—The Senate—Rufus King—William Pinkney—Mr. Macon—Judge Marshall—Election of J. Q. Adams—President Monroe—Meeting of Adams and Jackson—Jackson's Administration—Clay—Culhoun—Webster—Anecdotes.*

MY DEAR C\*\*\*\*\*

In the autumn of 1846, I went with my family to Paris, partly for literary purposes, and partly also to give my children advantages of education, which, in consequence of my absorbing cares for a series of years, they had been denied. Here they remained for nearly two years, while I returned home to attend to my affairs, spending the winters, however,



with them. Leaving my observations upon Paris to be grouped in one general view, I pass on with my narrative.

Toward the close of 1849 I removed to New York, to execute certain literary engagements. These completed, I went, in December, 1850, to Washington, taking my family with me. Here we remained for three months, when, having received the appointment of United States Consul to Paris, I returned to New York, and after due preparation, sailed on the 5th of April, 1851, to enter upon the official duties which thus devolved upon me.

I invite you to return with me to Washington. I had often been there, and had of course seen and observed many of the remarkable men who had figured in the great arena of politics, through a space of thirty years. I shall now gather up and present to you a few reminiscences connected with this, our national metropolis, which still linger in my mind. Avoiding political matters, however, which are duly chronicled in the books, I shall only give sketches of persons and things, less likely to have fallen under your observation.

My first visit to Washington was in the winter of 1819-20. Monroe was then President, and D. D. Tompkins, Vice-president; Marshall was at the head of the Supreme Court; Clay, Speaker of the House of Representatives. In the latter body, the two most noted members, exclusive of the speaker, were Wil-



liam Lowndes of South Carolina, and John Randolph of Virginia.

At the period of my visit, the clouds were mustering in the horizon for that tempest which not only agitated Congress, but the whole country, in consequence of the application of Missouri for admission into the Union. A few weeks later, the "Compromise of 36° 30'," was passed by both houses, but the actual admission of the State did not take place till the ensuing session. I was at Washington but one day, and of course could only take a hurried view of the principal objects of interest. I was in the House of Representatives but a single hour. While I was present, there was no direct discussion of the agitating subject which already filled everybody's mind, but still the excitement flared out occasionally in incidental allusions to it, like puffs of smoke and jets of flame which issue from a house that is on fire within. I recollect that Clay descended from the speaker's chair, and made a brief speech, thrilling the House by a single passage, in which he spoke of "poor, unheard Missouri"—she being then without a representative in Congress. His tall, tossing form, his long, sweeping gestures, and above all, his musical, yet thrilling tones, made an impression upon me which I can never forget. Some time after, in the course of the debate, a tall man, with a little head and a small, oval countenance like that of a boy prematurely grown old, arose and addressed the chair. He

paused a moment, and I had time to study his appearance. His hair was jet black, and clubbed in a queue; his eye was black, small, and painfully penetrating. His complexion was a yellowish-brown, bespeaking Indian blood. I knew at once that it must be John Randolph. As he uttered the words, "Mr. Speaker!"—every member turned in his seat, and facing him, gazed as if some portent had suddenly appeared before them. "Mr. Speaker"—said he, in a shrill voice, which, however, pierced every nook and corner of the hall—"I have but one word to say; one word, sir, and that is to state a fact. The measure to which the gentleman has just alluded, originated in a dirty trick!" These were his precise words. The subject to which he referred I did not gather, but the coolness and impudence of the speaker were admirable in their way. I never saw better acting, even in Kean. His look, his manner, his long arm, his elvish fore-finger—like an exclamation-point, punctuating his bitter thought—showed the skill of a master. The effect of the whole was to startle everybody, as if a pistol-shot had rung through the hall.\*

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\* A remarkable instance of the license which Mr. Randolph allowed to himself, occurred in the Senate, of which he was then a member, soon after Mr. Adams's accession to the presidency. In a discussion which took place upon the "Panama Mission," Randolph closed a very intemperate speech with the following words, on their face referring to events which had occurred at a recent race-course, but, in fact, plainly meaning the alliance between Mr. Adams and Mr. Clay:

"I was defeated, horse, foot, and dragoons—cut up, clean broke down

Soon after Lowndes arose, and there was a general movement of the members from the remote parts of the room, toward him. His appearance was remarkable. He was six feet two inches high—slender, bent, emaciated, and evidently of feeble frame. His complexion was sallow and dead, and his face almost without expression. His voice, too, was low and whispering. And yet he was, all things considered, the strong man of the House; strong in his various knowledge, his comprehensive understanding, his pure heart, his upright intentions, and above all, in the confidence these qualities had inspired. Every thing he said was listened to as the words of wisdom. It was he who gave utterance to the sentiment that the “office of president was neither to be solicited nor refused.” I was unable to hear what he said, but the stillness around—the intent listening of the entire assembly—

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by the coalition of Blifil and Black George—*by the combination, unheard of till then, of the Puritan with the Black-leg!*”

The “Coalition,” so much talked of at the time, charged Mr. Clay with giving Mr. Adams his influence in the election to the presidency, in consideration that he was to be Secretary of State. This was urged with great vehemence and effect, both against Mr. Adams’s administration and Mr. Clay, personally. Randolph’s endorsement of the charge, at this time, fiendish as the manner of it was, seemed a staggering blow, and Mr. Clay thought it necessary to call him to account for it. The duel took place on the banks of the Potomac, but Randolph fired in the air, and the difficulty was appeased.

No man in our history has been more discussed than John Randolph. He was undoubtedly a man of genius, but, on the whole, both in public and private, was an exceedingly dangerous example. He said some good things, and sometimes seemed almost inspired, but his mind and heart were soured and narrowed by inherent physical defects, which at last led to occasional lunacy. He died at Philadelphia in 1833, aged 60.

bore testimony to the estimation in which he was held. I never saw him afterward. About two years later, he died on a voyage to England for the benefit of his health, and thus, in the language of an eminent member of Congress, "were extinguished the brightest hopes of the country, which, by a general movement, were looking to him as the future chief-magistrate of the nation."

These sketches, I know, are trifles; but as this was my first look at either branch of Congress, and as, moreover, I had a glance at three remarkable men, you will perhaps excuse me for recording my impressions.

In the Senate, the persons who most attracted my attention were Rufus King, of New York, then holding the highest rank in that body for able statesmanship, combined with acknowledged probity and great dignity of person, manner, and character; Harrison Gray Otis, whom I have already described; William Hunter, of Rhode Island, noted for his agreeable presence and his great conversational powers; William Pinkney,\* of Maryland, the most dis-

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\* William Pinkney was a native of Annapolis, born 1764. He was appointed to various European missions by the United States government, and held other eminent public stations. His greatest celebrity, however, was attained at the bar, where he was distinguished alike for learning and eloquence. He was a great student, and prepared himself with the utmost care, though he affected to rely chiefly on his native powers. A member of Monroe's Cabinet once told me that he heard Pinkney, about five o'clock of a winter morning, reciting and committing to memory, in his room, the peroration of a plea which he heard delivered the same day before the Supreme Court!

tinguished lawyer of that era—a large, handsome man, and remarkable for his somewhat foppish dress—wearing, when I saw him, a white waistcoat, and white-top boots; and Mr. Macon, of North Carolina, a solid, farmer-like man, but greatly esteemed for combining a sound patriotism with a consistent political career. On the whole, the general aspect of the Senate was that of high dignity, sobriety, and refinement. There were more persons of that body who had the marks of well-bred gentlemen, in their air, dress, and demeanor, than at the present day. In manners, the Senate has unquestionably degenerated.

During the half hour in which I was present, there was no debate. I went to the hall of the Supreme Court, but the proceedings were without special interest. Among the judges were Marshall and Story, both of whom riveted my attention. The former was now sixty-four years old, and still in the full vigor of his career. He was tall and thin, with a small face, expressive of acuteness and amiability. His personal manner was eminently dignified, yet his brow did not seem to me to indicate the full force of his

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His senatorial displays are said to have been often more florid than profound. Soon after first taking his seat in the House of Representatives he made a speech, which was very brilliant, but rather pretentious and dictatorial. John Randolph gave him a hint of this. He said: "Mr. Speaker, the gentleman from Maryland"—then pausing, and looking toward Pinkney, added—"I believe the gentleman is from Maryland?" As Pinkney had been ambassador to several courts in Europe, and was the most conspicuous lawyer at the bar of the Supreme Court, he felt this sarcasm keenly. When I saw him, he had just taken his seat in the Senate; two years afterward he died, aged fifty-seven.

great abilities and lofty moral qualities. I saw him many times afterward, and learned to look with reverence upon him, as being the best representative of the era and spirit of Washington, which lingered among us.

I pass over several visits which I made at different periods to the capital, and come to the winter of 1825, when J. Q. Adams was elected President by the House of Representatives. I was in the gallery of that body at the time the vote was declared. The result produced no great excitement, for it had been foreseen for some days. The popular sentiment of the country, however, was no doubt overruled by electing to the chief-magistracy the second\* of the three candidates eligible to the office, and this was severely avenged four years afterward at the polls. Mr. Adams, with all the patronage of the government, was displaced by his rival, Gen. Jackson, in 1828, by an electoral vote of one hundred and seventy-eight to eighty-three.

But it is not my purpose to load these light letters with the weightier matters of politics. I only give an

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\* The electoral vote stood thus: for Gen. Jackson, ninety-nine; Mr. Adams, eighty-four; Mr. Crawford, forty-one; Mr. Clay, thirty-seven. It was perfectly constitutional to elect Mr. Adams, but the event showed the difficulty of sustaining a President who has less than one-third of the popular vote in his favor.

The vote in the House of Representatives was first declared by Daniel Webster, and then by John Randolph. At the announcement that Adams was elected, there was some clapping of hands and there were some hisses, whereupon the galleries were cleared.



outline of public events, which may serve as frames to the personal tableaux which I wish to present to your view. Let me take you, then, to the President's levee, the evening of the 2d of February, 1825—in the afternoon of which Adams had triumphed and Jackson had been defeated.

The apartments at the White House were thronged to repletion—for not only did all the world desire to meet and gossip over the events of the day, but this was one of the very last gatherings which would take place under the presidency of Monroe, and which had now continued for eight years. It was the first time that I had been present at a presidential levee, and it was therefore, to me, an event of no ordinary excitement.

The President I had seen before at Hartford, as I have told you; here, in the midst of his court, he seemed to me even more dull, sleepy, and insignificant in personal appearance, than on that occasion. He was under size, his dress plain black, and a little rusty; his neckcloth small, ropy, and carelessly tied; his frill matted; his countenance, wilted with age and study and care. He was almost destitute of forehead, and what he had, was deeply furrowed in two distinct arches over his eyes, which were small, gray, glimmering, and deeply set in large sockets. Altogether, his personal appearance was owlsh and ordinary—without dignity, either of form or expression; indeed, I could scarce get over the idea that



there was a certain look of meanness in his countenance. The lowness of his brow was so remarkable that a person in the room said to me, in looking at him—"He hasn't got brains enough to hold his hat on!" His manners, however, which were assiduously courteous, with a sort of habitual diplomatic smile upon his face, in some degree redeemed the natural indifference of his form and features. I gazed with eager curiosity at this individual—seeking, and yet in vain, to discover in his appearance the explanation of the fact that his presidency had been considered as the era of a millennial truce between the great parties whose strife had agitated the country to its foundations; and also of another fact—that he had, like Washington, been elected to the presidency a second time, almost without opposition. I could, however, find no solution of these events in the plain, homely, undemonstrative presence before me. History has indeed given the interpretation—for we know that, despite these traits in his personal appearance, Mr. Monroe possessed a quiet energy of character, combined with a sound and penetrating judgment, great experience, and strong sense, which rendered his administration in some respects eminently successful.

Mrs. Monroe appeared much younger, and was of very agreeable manners and person. During the eight years of her presidency over the sociabilities of the White House, she exercised a genial influence in

infusing elegance and dignity into the intercourse of the society which came under her sway.

I shall pass over other individuals present, only noting an incident which respects the two persons in the assembly who, most of all others, engrossed the thoughts of the visitors—Mr. Adams the elect, Gen. Jackson the defeated. It chanced in the course of the evening that these two persons, involved in the throng, approached each other from opposite directions, yet without knowing it. Suddenly, as they were almost together, the persons around, seeing what was to happen, by a sort of instinct stepped aside and left them face to face. Mr. Adams was by himself; Gen. Jackson had a large, handsome lady on his arm. They looked at each other for a moment, and then Gen. Jackson moved forward, and reaching out his long arm, said—"How do you do, Mr. Adams? I give you my left hand, for the right, as you see, is devoted to the fair: I hope you are very well, sir." All this was gallantly and heartily said and done. Mr. Adams took the general's hand, and said, with chilling coldness—"Very well, sir: I hope Gen. Jackson is well!" It was curious to see the western planter, the Indian fighter, the stern soldier who had written his country's glory in the blood of the enemy at New Orleans—genial and gracious, in the midst of a court, while the old courtier and diplomat was stiff, rigid, cold as a statue! It was all the more remarkable from the fact that, four hours before, the former

had been defeated, and the latter was the victor, in a struggle for one of the highest objects of human ambition. The personal character of these two individuals was in fact well expressed in that chance meeting: the gallantry, the frankness, and the heartiness of the one, which captivated all; the coldness, the distance, the self-concentration of the other, which repelled all.\*

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\* A somewhat severe but still acute analyst of Mr. Adams's character says: "Undoubtedly, one great reason of his unpopularity was his cold, antipathetic manner, and the suspicion of selfishness it suggested, or at least aided greatly to confirm. None approached Mr. Adams, but to recede. He never succeeded, he never tried to conciliate."

I recollect an anecdote somewhat illustrative of this. When he was candidate for the Presidency, his political friends thought it advisable that he should attend a cattle-show at Worcester, Mass., so as to conciliate the numbers of influential men who might be present. Accordingly he went, and while there many persons were introduced to him, and among the rest a farmer of the vicinity—a man of substance and great respectability. On being presented, he said—

"Mr. Adams, I am very glad to see you. My wife, when she was a gal, lived in your father's family; you were then a little boy, and she has told me a great deal about you. She has very often combed your head."

"Well," said Mr. Adams, in his harsh way—"I suppose she combs yours now!" The poor farmer slunk back like a lashed hound, feeling the smart, but utterly unconscious of the provocation.

Mr. Adams's course in the House of Representatives—to which he was elected for a series of years, after he had been President—was liable to great and serious exception. His age, the high positions he had held, his vast experience and unbounded stores of knowledge, might have made him the arbiter of that body. Such, however, was his love of gladiatorial displays, that he did more to promote scenes of collision, strife, and violence, in words and deeds, than any other member. I remember one day to have been on the floor of the House, when he attacked Mr. Wise with great personality and bitterness. In allusion to the Cilley duel, with which he was connected, he spoke of him as coming into that assembly, "his hands dripping with blood!" There was a terrible yarring tone in his voice, which gave added effect to the denunciation. Every person present seemed to be thrilled with a sort

I pass over several years, and come to the period when Jackson was President, at which time I was often at Washington. It was a marked epoch, for Webster, Calhoun, and Clay were then in the Senate. It is seldom that three such men appear upon the theater of action at the same time. They were each distinct from the other in person, manners, heart, constitution; they were from different sections of the country, and to some extent reflected the manners, habits, and opinions of these diverse regions. They were all of remarkable personal appearance: Webster of massive form, dark complexion, and thoughtful, solemn countenance; Clay, tall, of rather slight frame, but keen, flexible features, and singular ease and freedom in his attitudes, his walk, and his gestures. Calhoun was also tall, but erect, and rigid in his form—his eye grayish blue, and flashing from beneath a brow at once imperious and scornful. All these men were great actors, not through art, but nature, and gave to the effect of their high intellectual endowments, the added power of commanding personal presence and singularly expressive countenances. They have passed from the stage, and all

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of horror, rather toward Mr. Adams than the object of his reproaches. In speaking of this scene to me afterward, an eminent member of Congress said, that "Mr. Adams's greatest delight was to be the hero of a row." There is no doubt that the rude personal passages which often occur in the House of Representatives, derived countenance from Mr. Adams's example. It is melancholy to reflect how a great intellect, and, on the whole, a great life, were marred and dwarfed by inherent personal defects.

that survives of them belongs to the domain of history. Many of the speeches, now recorded in their books, I heard and remember, with their lofty images still painted in my eye and their thrilling tones still echoing in my ear. Those who never heard them, never saw them, will hereafter read and ponder and admire the glowing words, the mighty thoughts they have left behind; but they can never compass the conceptions which linger in the minds of those who beheld them in the full exercise of their faculties, and playing their several parts on their great theater of life and action—the Senate of the United States.

Calhoun was educated in Connecticut, first graduating at Yale College, and then at the Litchfield law school. I have often heard his classmates speak of him as manifesting great abilities and great ambition, from the beginning. He was particularly noted for his conversational powers, and a cordiality of manners which won the hearts of all. He was deemed frank, hearty, sympathetic. One of his intimates at Yale, told me that about the year 1812 he was elected to Congress. Mr. Calhoun was then a member, and one of the greatest pleasures his classmate anticipated, was in meeting his college friend. He was kindly received, but in the first interview, he discovered that the heart of the now rising politician was gone. He had already given up to ambition what was meant for mankind.

Mr. Calhoun had, however, many friends in New

England, partly from the favorable impression he made while residing there, and partly also from his conduct during the earlier portion of his public career. He had, indeed, promoted the war of 1812, but in many of his opinions—especially in the support of a navy—he coincided with the North. His administration of the war department from 1817, during the long period of seven years, was singularly successful, and everywhere increased his reputation as a practical statesman. It is a curious circumstance, explained by the facts I have just mentioned, that in the election of 1824, while Jackson was defeated for the presidency, Calhoun was still chosen vice-president, and mainly by northern votes.\* Thus far his measures, his policy, had been national; but he soon changed, and frequently shifting his position, lost the confidence of his own party and of the country. For the last fifteen years of his life, “he was like a strong man struggling in a morass: every effort to extricate himself only sinking him deeper and deeper.” He has passed away, leaving abundant evidences of his abilities, but with the sad distinction of having successfully devoted the last years of his life to the establishment of the doctrine in his own State and among many of his admirers, that domestic Slavery is a good and beneficent institution—compatible with the Constitution of the United States, and entitled to pro-

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\* Mr. Calhoun had one hundred and fourteen votes from the non-slaveholding States, and sixty-eight only from the others.



tection and perpetuity beneath its banner! What a departure is this from the views and opinions of the founders of our National Independence and the Federal Union—Washington, Franklin, Jefferson, and Madison!

Mr. Clay was also a supporter of the war of 1812, and probably was, more than any other individual, responsible for it. During its progress, he was the eloquent defender of the administration, through its struggles and disasters, and was hence the special object of New England hostility. He, however, joined Mr. Adams, in 1825, and having contributed, by his commanding influence, to his election, became his Secretary of State. His policy upon the tariff afterward brought him into harmony with the North, and he was long the favorite candidate of the whigs for the presidency. But he, too, like Calhoun, was a man of "positions," and with all his abilities—with all his struggles—he slipped between them, and fell, without realizing the great object of his eager ambition—the presidency.\*

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\* There seems to have been a singular fatuity in Mr. Clay's great measures—if we may be permitted to test them by time and their result. He promoted the war, but was himself one of the negotiators of a peace with the enemy, without a single stipulation in regard to the causes of the war, and this too after an expenditure of thirty thousand lives and a hundred millions of dollars on our side, and probably an equal expenditure on the other. The Missouri Compromise of 1820, which he so far favored as to gain the credit of it, has been recently expunged, leaving national discord and local civil war in its place. The Compromise of 1833 was regarded by many of the eminent men in the country, as one of the most disastrous political movements that could



The first time I ever saw Mr. Webster was on the 17th of June, 1825, at the laying of the corner-stone of the Bunker Hill Monument. I shall never forget his appearance as he strode across the open area, encircled by some fifty thousand persons—men and women—waiting for the “Orator of the Day,” nor the shout that simultaneously burst forth, as he was recognized, carrying up to the skies the name of “Webster!” “Webster!” “Webster!”

It was one of those lovely days in June, when the

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have been devised, and by its inconsistency with his previous doctrines, lost him forever the confidence of his best friends, especially at the North. Mr. J. Q. Adams once told me that he considered this as a fatal mistake on Mr. Clay's part, as he saved Mr. Calhoun without conciliating him, at the same time alienating many leading men throughout the country who had before been devoted to him. The Compromise of 1850, in which Mr. Clay was the chief, has already lost its force, and is likely hereafter to be rather a source of agitation than of peace. His grand and comprehensive system, to which he gave the name of “American,” and which proposed to build up a mighty nation through a National Bank, giving us a currency—Internal Improvements, promoting commerce and binding the States in the bonds of union—the Tariff, to render us independent of foreign nations in peace and in war—and the Panama Mission, placing us at the head of the powers of this continent,—all these have been trampled under foot by Jackson, and Van Buren, and Polk, and Pierce, and the People. They have been erased from our policy, and their history is chiefly memorable for the ability with which their great originator promoted them, and yet only to insure the defeat of his own ambition. After a few brief years, Henry Clay will be only known to the student of history, who looks beyond existing monuments for testimonials of the giants of bygone generations. Even his speeches, stirring as they were on those who heard them—having no eminence in literature, no body and soul of general truth, reflection, and philosophy, and little connection with current politics—will soon be among the traditions of the past. The fallacy of Mr. Clay's career lay in this—he created issues, founded schemes, planned systems, as the ladders of ambition; the truer plan, even for ambition, is to **make truth and duty and principle the polar star of life and action.**

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sun is bright, the air clear, and the breath of nature so sweet and pure as to fill every bosom with a grateful joy in the mere consciousness of existence. There were present long files of soldiers in their holiday attire; there were many associations, with their mottoed banners; there were lodges and grand lodges, in white aprons and blue scarfs; there were miles of citizens from the towns and the country round about; there were two hundred gray-haired men, remnants of the days of the Revolution; there was among them a stranger, of great mildness and dignity of appearance, on whom all eyes rested, and when his name was known, the air echoed with the cry—"Welcome, welcome, Lafayette!"\* Around all this scene, was a

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\* I was at this time Master of the Lodge at Hartford, St. John's No. 4, and attended this celebration officially as a deputy from the Grand Lodge of Connecticut. I recollect that when the lodges assembled at Boston, Gen. Lafayette was among them. I had seen him before in Paris, at a dinner on Washington's birthday, A. D. 1824, when he first announced his intention of coming to America. I afterward saw him, both at Washington and Paris. I may mention a single anecdote, illustrative of his tenderness of heart. While he was at Washington, Mr. Morse—since so universally known as the inventor of the electric telegraph—was employed to paint his portrait for the City Hall of New York. One day, when the people were collecting in the hall of the hotel for dinner, I saw Mr. Morse apart, in the corner of the room, reading a letter. I noticed, in a moment, that he was greatly agitated. I went to him, and asked him the cause. He could not speak; he put the letter into my hand, and staggered out of the room. I looked over the epistle, and saw that it contained the fatal intelligence of the death of his wife, at New Haven, whom he had left there, in health, a few days before. He felt it necessary to leave Washington immediately, and go to his friends, and I agreed to accompany him. It was necessary that this should be communicated to Lafayette. I went to him and told him the story. He was very much affected, and went with me to see Mr. Morse. He took him in his arms and kissed him, and wept over him,

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rainbow of beauty such as New England alone can furnish.

I have seen many public festivities and ceremonials, but never one, taken all together, of more general interest than this. Every thing was fortunate: all were gratified; but the address was that which seemed uppermost in all minds and hearts. Mr. Webster was in the very zenith of his fame and of his powers. I have looked on many mighty men—King George, the “first gentleman in England;” Sir Astley Cooper, the Apollo of his generation; Peele, O’Connell, Palmerston, Lyndhurst—all nature’s noblemen; I have seen Cuvier, Guizot, Arago, Lamartine—marked in their persons by the genius which have carried their names over the world; I have seen Clay, and Calhoun, and Pinkney, and King, and Dwight, and Daggett, who stand as high examples of personal endowment, in our annals, and yet not one of these approached Mr. Webster in the commanding power of their personal presence. There

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as if he had been his own child. Nothing could be more soothing than this affectionate sympathy.

In Mr. Webster’s discourse, which I have been noticing, there was a passage addressed to Lafayette, which, I believe, is slightly altered in the present printed copy. It was told as an anecdote, some years ago, that he composed the discourse while fishing for cod off Nantasket Beach. It would seem that as he came to the point of addressing Lafayette, he had a vigorous bite, and from habit, more than attention to the business in hand, began to haul in. Just as the fish emerged from the water, Mr. Webster went on thus—“Fortunate man! the representative of two hemispheres—welcome to these shores!”—whereupon the huge fish was safely jerked into the boat. I can not vouch for the authenticity of the story, but I tell it as too good to be lost.

was a grandeur in his form, an intelligence in his deep dark eye, a loftiness in his expansive brow, a significance in his arched lip, altogether beyond those of any other human being I ever saw. And these, on the occasion to which I allude, had their full expression and interpretation.

In general, the oration was serious, full of weighty thought and deep reflection. Occasionally there were flashes of fine imagination, and several passages of deep, overwhelming emotion.\* I was near the speaker, and not only heard every word, but I saw every movement of his countenance. When he came to address the few scarred and time-worn veterans—some forty in number—who had shared in the bloody scene which all had now gathered to commemorate, he paused a moment, and, as he uttered the words “Venerable men,” his voice trembled, and I could see a cloud pass over the sea of faces that turned upon the speaker. When at last, alluding to the death of Warren, he said—

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\* One incident, which occurred on this occasion, is worth mentioning. I sat near two old men, farmers I should judge, who remained with their mouths open from the beginning to the end of the oration. Not a sentence escaped them. I could see reflected in their countenances the whole march of the discourse. When it was over, they rose up, and having drawn a long breath, one said to the other—“Well, that was good; *every word seemed to weigh a pound!*” While Mr. Webster was in Europe in 1839, I wrote a series of anecdotal sketches of him, published in the *National Intelligencer*, and among other things, recited this incident. It found its way to England, and the *London Times*, in describing Mr. Webster’s manner in the speech he made at the Oxford Cattle Show, repeated this anecdote as particularly descriptive of his massive and weighty eloquence.

“But ah, Him!—the first great martyr of this great cause. Him, the patriotic victim of his own self-devoting heart. Him, cut off by Providence in the hour of overwhelming anxiety and thick gloom: falling ere he saw the star of his country rise—how shall I struggle with the emotions that stifle the utterance of thy name!” Here the eyes of the veterans around, little accustomed to tears, were filled to the brim, and some of them “sobbed aloud in their fullness of heart.” The orator went on:

“Our poor work may perish, but thine shall endure: this monument may molder away, the solid ground it rests upon may sink down to the level of the sea; but thy memory shall not fail. Wherever among men a heart shall be found that beats to the transports of patriotism and liberty, its aspirations shall claim kindred with thy spirit!”

I have never seen such an effect, from a single passage: a moment before, every bosom bent, every brow was clouded, every eye was dim. Lifted as by inspiration, every breast seemed now to expand, every gaze to turn above, every face to beam with a holy yet exulting enthusiasm. It was the omnipotence of eloquence, which, like the agitated sea, carries a host upon its waves, sinking and swelling with its irresistible undulations.

It was some years subsequent to this that I became personally acquainted with Mr. Webster. From 1836, to the time of his death, I saw him frequently,

sometimes in public and sometimes in private. I have heard some of his great speeches, as well at Washington as elsewhere, but I must say that his conversation impressed me quite as strongly as his public addresses. I once traveled with him from Washington to Baltimore. During a ride of two hours, he spoke of a great variety of subjects—agriculture, horticulture, physical geography, geology—with a perfectness of knowledge, from the minutest details to the highest philosophy, which amazed me. One thing I particularly remarked, he had no half conceptions, no uncertain knowledge. What he knew, he was sure of. His recollection seemed absolutely perfect. His mind grasped the smallest as well as the greatest things. He spoke of experiments he had made at Marshfield in protecting trees, recently planted, by interposing boards between them and the prevailing winds, observing that these grew nearly twice as rapidly as those which were exposed to the full sweep of the blasts. He spoke of the recent discoveries of geology—which had converted the rocky lamina of the earth, hidden from the beginning, into leaves of a book, in which we could trace the footprints of the Creator—with perfect knowledge of the subject, and a full appreciation of the sublimity of its revelations.

At Baltimore, while sitting at table after tea, the conversation continued, taking in a great variety of subjects. One of the ladies of our company asked



Mr. Webster if he chose Marshfield for a residence because it was near the sea.

“Yes, madam,” was the reply.

“And do you love the seashore?”

“Yes, I love it, yet not perhaps as others do. I can not pick up shells and pebbles along the shore. I can never forget the presence of the sea. It seems to speak to me, and beckon to me. When I see the surf come rolling in, like a horse foaming from the battle, I can not stoop down and pick up pebbles. The sea unquestionably presents more grand and exciting pictures and conceptions to the mind, than any other portion of the earth, partly because it is always new to us, and partly, too, because of the majestic movement of its great mass of waters. The mystery of its depths, the history of its devastations, crowd the mind with lofty images.

“ ‘The armaments which thunderstrike the walls  
Of rock-built cities, bidding nations quake,  
And monarchs tremble in their capitals—  
The oak leviathans, whose huge ribs make  
Their clay creator the vain title take  
Of lord of thee and arbiter of war:  
These are thy toys, and as the snowy flake,  
They melt into the yeast of waves, which mar  
Alike the Armada’s pride or spoils of Trafalgar.

“ ‘Thou glorious mirror, where the Almighty’s form  
Glasses itself in tempests : in all time,  
Calm or convulsed—in breeze or gale or storm,  
Icing the pole, or in the torrid clime,



Dark-heaving : boundless, endless, and sublime—  
The image of Eternity—the throne  
Of the Invisible ; even from out thy slime  
The monsters of the deep are made : each zone  
Obeys thee · thou goest forth dread, fathomless, alone !'

I know of few descriptions of nature equal in sublimity to that."

It is impossible to give any impression of the effect of this passage, recited in low, solemn tones like the bass of an organ, the brow of the speaker seeming to reflect the very scenes it described.

Yet Mr. Webster was not always serious. In the circle of intimate friends he was generally cheerful and sometimes playful, not only relishing wit and repartee, but contributing to it his proper share. I have heard of one occasion in which he kept a full table in a roar for half an hour with his sallies. Many years ago there was a contested election in Mississippi—the seats of two sitting members being claimed by a Mr. Word and the famous orator, S. S. Prentiss.\* The two claimants came to Washington,

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\* S. S. Prentiss was a native of Maine, but removed to Mississippi, where he soon distinguished himself as a brilliant orator. In the Harrison Campaign of 1840, "he took the stump," and made a series of most effective speeches, crowds gathering from many miles around, to hear him. One day he met with a caravan of wild beasts, and it was suggested that he should speak from the top of one of the wagons. He mounted that of the hyenas, and as he was lame, and carried a strong cane, occasionally he poked this through a hole in the top and stirred up the hyenas within. Prentiss had scathing powers of denunciation, and he was unsparing in his sarcasms upon the administration of Jackson and his successor Van Buren, which, as he insisted, had caused the ruin then

and argued their case before the House, but it was dismissed, and they were sent back for a new election. Prentiss, however, had sustained himself with so much ability, that before his departure a few of his whig friends concluded to give him a dinner. This was private, though some thirty persons were present. Late in the evening, when all were warmed with the cheer, Preston, of South Carolina, rose and proposed this sentiment:

"Daniel Webster—a Northern man with Southern principles!"

Mr. Webster, after a moment's hesitation, said: "Mr. Chairman, I rise in obedience to the flattering call of my good friend from South Carolina: *Daniel Webster—a Northern man with Southern principles!* Well, sir, I was born in New Hampshire, and therefore I am a northern man. There is no doubt of that. And if what the people say of us be true, it is equally certain that I am a man of southern principles. Sir, do I ever leave a heel-tap in my glass? Do I ever pay my debts? Don't I always prefer

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desolating the country; but when to his blasting sentences were added the howlings of the hyenas, judiciously put in at the climaxes, it was something more than words—it was "action, action, action!"

I remember once to have heard this famous orator, the same season, at a whig meeting in Faneuil Hall, Edward Everett presiding. I hardly knew which most to admire—the polished elegance, spiced with graceful and pertinent wit, of Everett, or the dashing splendor of Prentiss. The one seemed like the fountain of Velino playing amid Grecian sculpture; the other, a cataract of the Far West, fed from inexhaustible fountains, and lighting whole forests with its crystals and its foam.

Mr. Prentiss died in 1850, greatly lamented, at the early age of forty.

challenging a man who won't fight?" And thus he went on in a manner more suitable to the occasion than to these pages—until at last, amid roars of laughter and shouts of applause, he sat down.

The countenance of Mr. Webster was generally solemn, and even severe, especially when he was absorbed in thought: yet when relaxed with agreeable emotions, it was irresistibly winning. I have heard an anecdote which furnishes a pleasing illustration of this. At the time Mr. Wirt was Attorney-general, Mr. Webster, having some business with him, went to his office. Mr. Wirt was engaged for a few moments at his desk, and asked Mr. Webster to sit down a short time, when he would come to him. Mr. Webster did as requested, and for some moments sat looking moodily into the fire. At length one of Mr. Wirt's children—a girl of six or eight years old—came in, and thinking it was her father, went to Mr. Webster, and putting her elbows on his knee, looked up in his face. In an instant she started back, shocked at her mistake, and appalled by the dark, moody countenance before her. At the same moment Mr. Webster became aware of her presence. His whole face changed in an instant: a smile came over his face; he put out his hand, and all was so winning, that the child, after hesitating a moment, also smiled, and went back and resumed her confiding position, as if it had indeed been her father.

That Mr. Webster had his faults, we all know;

but the general soundness of his heart and character, as well as the soundness of his intellect, are demonstrated by his works. These are an indestructible monument, attesting alike his greatness and his goodness. Among all these volumes, so full of thought, so pregnant with instruction, so abounding in knowledge, there is not an impure suggestion, not a mean sentiment, not a malicious sentence. All is patriotic, virtuous, ennobling. And the truths he thus uttered—how are they beautified, adorned, and commended by the purity of the style and the elegance of the diction! In this respect there is a remarkable difference between him and his great rivals, Clay and Calhoun. Mr. Webster's works abound in passages which convey beautiful sentiments in beautiful language\*—gems of

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\* It would be easy to fill volumes with passages of this sort: the following, taken at random from Mr. Webster's published works, will illustrate what I have said:

"Justice, sir, is the great interest of man on earth. It is the ligament which holds civilized beings and civilized nations together. Where her temple stands, and so long as it is duly honored, there is a foundation for social security, general happiness, and the improvement and progress of our race."

"One may live as a conqueror, a king, or a magistrate, but he must die as a man. The bed of death brings every human being to his pure individuality; to the intense contemplation of that deepest and most solemn of all relations, the relation between the Creator and the created."

"Real goodness does not attach itself merely to this life; it points to another world."

"Religion is the tie that connects man with his Creator, and holds him to his throne. If that tie be all sundered, all broken, he floats away, a worthless atom in the universe—its proper attractions all gone, its destiny thwarted, and its whole future nothing but darkness, desolation, and death."

Speaking at Valley Forge of the sufferings of the American army

thought set in golden sentences, fitting them to become the adornments of gifted and tasteful minds, for all future time. With these other orators it is not so: there is an earnest, direct, vigorous logic in Calhoun, which, however, can spare not a sentence to any subsidiary thought; there is a warm, glowing, hearty current of persuasion in Clay, yet he is too ardent in the pursuit of his main design, to pause for

there, under Washington, in the winter of 1777-8, he described them as "destitute of clothing, destitute of provisions, destitute of every thing but their faith in God and their immortal leader."

"The slightest glance must convince us that mechanical power and mechanical skill, as they are now exhibited in Europe and America, mark an epoch in human history worthy of all admiration. Machinery is made to perform what has formerly been the toil of human hands, to an extent that astonishes the most sanguine, with a degree of power to which no number of human arms is equal, and with such precision and exactness as almost to suggest the notion of reason and intelligence in the machines themselves. Every natural agent is put unrelentingly to the task. The winds work, the waters work, the elasticity of metals works; gravity is solicited into a thousand new forms of action; levers are multiplied upon levers; wheels revolve on the peripheries of other wheels; the saw and the plane are tortured into an accommodation to new uses, and last of all, with inimitable power, and 'with whirlwind sound,' comes the potent agency of steam."

"Steam is found in triumphant operation on the seas; and under the influence of its strong propulsion, the gallant ship,

'Against the wind, against the tide,  
Still *steadies* with an upright keel.'

It is on the rivers, and the boatman may repose on his oars; it is on highways, and begins to exert itself along the courses of land conveyance; it is at the bottom of mines, a thousand feet below the earth's surface; it is in the mill, and in the workshops of the trades. It rows, it pumps, it excavates, it carries, it draws, it lifts, it hammers, it spins, it weaves, it prints."

"Whether it be consciousness, or the result of his reasoning faculties, man soon learns that he must die. And of all sentient beings, he alone, as far as we can judge, attains to this knowledge. His Maker has made him capable of learning this. Before he knows his origin

a moment to gather or scatter flowers by the wayside. In all the works of these two great men, it is not easy to select a page which may challenge admiration on account of its artistic beauty, or because it enshrines general truth and philosophy, so happily expressed as to enforce them upon the worship of the heart.

Of Mr. Webster's magnanimity, there are abundant

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and destiny, he knows that he is to die. Then comes that most urgent and solemn demand for light that ever proceeded, or can proceed, from the profound and anxious broodings of the human soul. It is stated, with wonderful force and beauty, in that incomparable composition, the book of Job : ' For there is hope of a tree, if it be cut down, that it will sprout again, and that the tender branch thereof will not cease ; that, through the scent of water, it will bud, and bring forth boughs like a plant. *But if a man die, shall he live again ?*' And that question nothing but God, and the religion of God, can solve. Religion does solve it, and teaches every man that he is to live again, and that the duties of this life have reference to the life which is to come. And hence, since the introduction of Christianity, it has been the duty, as it has been the effort, of the great and the good, to sanctify human knowledge, to bring it to the fount, and to baptize learning into Christianity ; to gather up all its productions, its earliest and its latest, its blossoms and its fruits, and lay them all upon the altar of religion and virtue."

"I shall enter on no encomium upon Massachusetts ; she needs none. There she is. Behold her, and judge for yourselves. There is her history ; the world knows it by heart. The past, at least, is secure. There is Boston, and Concord, and Lexington, and Bunker Hill ; and there they will remain forever. The bones of her sons, falling in the great struggle for Independence, now lie mingled with the soil of every State, from New England to Georgia ; and there they will lie forever. And, sir, where American Liberty raised its first voice, and where its youth was nurtured and sustained, there it still lives, in the strength of its manhood and full of its original spirit. If discord and disunion shall wound it, if party strife and blind ambition shall hawk at and tear it, if folly and madness, if uneasiness under salutary and necessary restraint, shall succeed in separating it from that Union by which alone its existence is made sure, it will stand, in the end, by the side of that cradle in which its infancy was rocked ; it will stretch forth its arm, with whatever of vigor it may still retain, over the friends who gather round



evidences. His whole course in the House as well as in the Senate evinced it. He never displayed, because he never felt that littleness of soul, which signalizes itself in envy, and malice, and uncharitableness. Nothing can be finer than the uniform dignity of his conduct through a congressional period of more than twenty years. But there are two instances of his greatness of soul, which have appeared to me remarkable, and especially worthy of being recorded, because they refer to those individuals, Clay and Calhoun, who of all others he might have been supposed to regard with feelings of aversion, if not of hostility.

It is well remembered by all those who are conversant with the history of the times, that Mr. Webster, then acting as Secretary of State in the Tyler Cabinet, thought fit to continue in his place, when the

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it; and it will fall at last, if fall it must, amid the proudest monuments of its own glory, and on the very spot of its origin."

It is known that some of these fine passages were suddenly struck out in the heat of debate; others no doubt were polished and perfected with care. On a certain occasion, Mr. Webster startled the Senate by a beautiful and striking remark in relation to the extent of the British empire, as follows: "She has dotted the surface of the whole globe with her possessions and military posts, whose morning drum-beat, following the sun and keeping company with the hours, circle the earth daily with one continuous and unbroken strain of the martial airs of England."

On going out of the Senate, one of the members complimented Mr. Webster upon this, saying that he was all the more struck with it as it was evidently impromptu. "You are mistaken," said Mr. Webster "the idea occurred to me when I was on the ramparts of Quebec, some months since. I wrote it down, and re-wrote it, and after several trials, got it to suit me, and laid it by for use. The time came to-day, and so I put it in."



other members resigned. This conduct drew upon him attacks from various quarters, and especially from those who were known to take counsel of Mr. Clay. It was manifest, as well from the bitterness as the persistence of the onslaught, that the purpose was to effect Mr. Webster's destruction as a public man. This object was not accomplished, for it soon appeared to the world that he had been governed by the highest motives of patriotism, in the course he had adopted, and that he had indeed made it the means of accomplishing a great national benefit—the settling of the irritating and threatening question of the “Maine boundary.” In fact, Mr. Webster rather gained than lost in the confidence of men whose opinions are of value, in spite of this conspiracy which sought to overwhelm him.

In the spring of 1844, Mr. Clay, having been on a trip to the South, came to Washington. He was already indicated by public opinion as the whig candidate for the presidency, and it seemed highly probable that the time had now come for the realization of his known and cherished aspirations, in respect to that high position. He was himself sanguine of success. On the 1st of May he was nominated at Baltimore, by a whig convention, for the office in question, and the next day there was to be a grand rally of young men, to ratify the nomination. It was suggested to Mr. Clay that it was eminently desirable that Mr. Webster should add his influence in behalf

of the nomination; but he is said to have felt that he neither needed nor desired it. His friends, however, thought otherwise, and a message was dispatched to Mr. Webster, begging him to come on to the convention, already gathering at Baltimore. This reached him while he was dining at the Astor House, in New York. He immediately left the table, and after a brief communion with himself, departed, and arrived in time to join his voice in a powerful speech, to the enthusiasm of the occasion.

A very short period after this, the clouds began to thicken in the political horizon. Mr. Polk had been nominated, and the important State of Pennsylvania was seen to be in danger of giving him her vote. In this emergency, Mr. Webster was besought to go there and address the people at Philadelphia, and in the mining districts, where large masses were congregated. Perfectly well knowing Mr. Clay's sentiments and conduct toward him, he still went, and made a series of addresses, among the most eloquent that he ever uttered. In the course of these, he had occasion to speak of Mr. Clay. It was a delicate task, therefore, to do justice to his position, as an advocate of Mr. Clay's candidacy, while at the same time Mr. Clay's treatment of him was fresh in the public mind. Yet with a tact, which does infinite credit to his good taste, and a magnanimity which equally honors his heart, he spoke of Mr. Clay in the following words:

“There are two candidates in the field; Mr. Clay of Kentucky, and Mr. Polk of Tennessee. I shall speak of them both with the respect to which their character and position entitle them; and at the same time with that freedom and candor which ought to be observed in discussing the merits of public men, especially those who are candidates for the highest office in the gift of the people.

“Mr. Clay has been before the country for a long period, nearly forty years. Over thirty years he has taken a leading and highly important part in the public affairs of this country. He is acknowledged to be a man of singular and almost universal talent. He has had great experience in the administration of our public affairs in various departments. He has served for many years with wonderful judgment and ability, in both houses of Congress, of one of which he performed the arduous and difficult duties of its presiding officer, with unexampled skill and success. He has rendered most important services to his country of a diplomatic character, as the representative of this government in Europe, at one of the most trying periods of our history, and ably assisted to conduct to a satisfactory conclusion a very delicate and important negotiation. He has performed the duties of the department of State with ability and fidelity. He is a man of frankness and honor, of unquestioned talent and ability, and of a noble and generous bearing.

“Mr. Polk is a much younger man than Mr. Clay. He is a very respectable gentleman in private life; he has been in Congress; was once Speaker of the House of Representatives of the United States, and once Governor of the State of Tennessee.”

We may not only refer to this passage as evidence of Mr. Webster's magnanimity of soul, but as a high example of gentlemanly dignity—in the very heat of an animated party discussion, not forgetting to render justice even to an adversary.

In respect to Mr. Calhoun, Mr. Webster displayed similar elevation of mind. It is matter of history that, in the earlier periods of their congressional life, these two men were drawn together by mutual admiration. But party exigences have no respect for private feelings, and accordingly Mr. Calhoun joined the conspiracy, which, in 1832, was formed to crush Mr. Webster; a measure which it was hoped to accomplish through the eloquence of Mr. Hayne, assisted by the united talent of the democratic party, at that time powerfully represented in the Senate. That he escaped, was owing to his own matchless abilities\*—for there is hardly an instance on record in which a man, single-handed, has withstood and baffled and punished so formidable a combination. For several years immediately following, Mr. Webster was called into an almost perpetual conflict with Mr. Calhoun—from this point his stern, unflinching adversary. By general consent, others stood aloof, almost in awe of the conflict between these two champions. The struggle furnishes some of the most remarkable passages in our political history. But an event at last

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\* The "great debate" here alluded to, took place in the Senate, in January, 1830. Colonel Hayne had attacked Mr. Webster with great power, fortified as he was by facts, arguments, and suggestions, furnished by democratic members from all parts of the Union, and going over Mr. Webster's whole political life. The reply was triumphant and overwhelming, and is justly considered the greatest forensic effort which our history supplies. There is, indeed, so far as I know, no speech which equals it, if we regard the variety of its topics, the vast scope of its leading considerations, the beauty and felicity of many of its passages, and its completeness as a whole.

arrived which was to put an end to the strife. Mr. Calhoun, who had gradually been sinking under a decay of health and constitution, expired at Washington on the 31st of March, 1850. It was then that Mr. Webster rose in the Senate and pronounced upon him a eulogium, in which all his merits were beautifully set forth, without one of the many shadows which truth might have furnished.

“Sir,” said Mr. Webster, “the eloquence of Mr. Calhoun, or the manner of his exhibition of his sentiments in public bodies, was part of his intellectual character. It grew out of the qualities of his mind. It was plain, strong, terse, condensed, concise; sometimes impassioned, still always severe. Rejecting ornament, not often seeking far for illustration, his power consisted in the plainness of his propositions, in the closeness of his logic, and in the earnestness and energy of his manner. These are the qualities, as I think, which have enabled him through such a long course of years to speak often, and yet always command attention. His demeanor as a Senator is known to us all—is appreciated, venerated by us all. No man was more respectful to others; no man carried himself with greater decorum, no man with superior dignity.

“Sir, I have not in public or in private life known a more assiduous person in the discharge of his appropriate duties. He seemed to have no recreation but the pleasure of conversation with his friends. Out of the chambers of Congress, he was either devoting himself to the acquisition of knowledge pertaining to the immediate subject of the duty before him, or else he was indulging in some social interviews in which he so much delighted. His colloquial talents were certainly singular and eminent. There was a charm in his conversation not often found. He delighted especially in conversation and intercourse with young men. I suppose that there has been no man among

us who had more winning manners, in such an intercourse and such conversation, with men comparatively young, than Mr. Calhoun. I believe one great power of his character, in general, was his conversational talent. I believe it is that, as well as a consciousness of his high integrity, and the greatest reverence for his talents and ability, that has made him so endeared an object to the people of the State to which he belonged.

“Mr. President, he had the basis, the indispensable basis, of all high character—and that was, unspotted integrity, unimpeached honor and character. If he had aspirations, they were high, and honorable, and noble. There was nothing groveling, or low, or meanly selfish, that came near the head or the heart of Mr. Calhoun. Firm in his purpose, perfectly patriotic and honest, as I am sure he was, in the principles that he espoused and in the measures that he defended, aside from that large regard for that species of distinction that conducted him to eminent stations for the benefit of the Republic, I do not believe he had a selfish motive or selfish feeling. However, sir, he may have differed from others of us in his political opinions or his political principles, those principles and those opinions will now descend to posterity under the sanction of a great name. He has lived long enough, he has done enough, and he has done it so well, so successfully, so honorably, as to connect himself for all time with the records of his country. He is now an historical character. Those of us who have known him here will find that he has left upon our minds and our hearts a strong and lasting impression of his person, his character, and his public performances, which while we live will never be obliterated. We shall hereafter, I am sure, indulge in it as a grateful recollection, that we have lived in his age, that we have been his contemporaries, that we have seen him, and heard him, and known him. We shall delight to speak of him to those who are rising up to fill our places. And, when the time shall come that we ourselves shall go, one after another, to our graves, we shall carry with us a deep sense of his genius and character, his honor and integrity.



his amiable deportment in private life, and the purity of his exalted patriotism."

Was there not something grand and at the same time affecting in a scene like this—a great man—all selfish thought rebuked, all passed bitterness forgot—uttering words like these, over the now prostrate competitor with whom it had been his lot to wrestle through long years of the bitterest party conflict?

But I must draw this chapter to a close; yet my memory is, indeed, full of the images of other men of mark whom I have seen upon the great stage of action at Washington. Among them was William Wirt, an able lawyer, an elegant writer, an accomplished gentleman—and, at the time I knew him, Attorney-general of the United States; Mr. Forsyth, Gen. Jackson's accomplished Secretary of State, at whose house I remember once to have dined when Mr. Benton, Isaac Hill, John M. Niles,\* and others

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\* John M. Niles was a native of Windsor, Connecticut. He studied law, and settled at Hartford, devoting himself, however, to politics. He was of small, awkward, and insignificant personal appearance, and for this reason, probably, was for many years treated and regarded with some degree of contempt, especially by the federalists, to whom he was politically opposed. I knew him well, and early learned to appreciate the logical force of his understanding. He was associated in the *Times* newspaper, and was probably, more than any other single person, the instrument of overturning the federal party in the State, in 1817. He now rose to various eminent public stations, at last becoming a Senator of the United States, and for a short time Postmaster-general under Mr. Polk. He had strong common sense, and close reasoning powers, which operated with the precision of cog-wheels. Mr. Webster regarded his speech upon the tariff, while he was in the Senate, as one of the very ablest ever delivered upon that subject.

I must give a sketch of a scene in Mr. Forsyth's parlor, on the occasion



were present; "John Taylor of Caroline," an able Virginian statesman, and the very personification of old-fashioned dignity and courtesy; Albert Gallatin, a dark, swarthy man, with an eye that seemed to penetrate the souls of all who approached him; Henry R. Storrs,\* a native of Connecticut, but a representative from New York—one of the ablest debaters of his day; Hayne of South Carolina, the gallant but unsuccessful jousting with Mr. Webster; Burgess of Rhode

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above alluded to, as it presents a tableaux of three marked men. The dinner had been finished for some time, but several of the gentlemen lingered at the table. The ladies had retired, and made a considerable semicircle around the fire in the parlor. Mr. Forsyth was in the middle of this room, receiving the gentlemen as they came from the dining-hall, and who, after a little conversation with him, bowed to the ladies and took their leave.

At last Messrs. Benton, Hill, and Niles came from the dining-room together, and stopped to converse with Mr. Forsyth. Mr. Hill, who was very lame, said good-night to his host and went straight to the door, without taking the slightest notice of the bright circle around the fireside. Benton came next; but he is an old courtier, and therefore paid his addresses to the ladies, beginning with Mrs. Meigs—Mrs. Forsyth's mother—and bowing gracefully to each, was about to take his leave. Niles came next. His first idea evidently was to follow the example of Isaac Hill, but as Benton was actually performing his courtesies, he felt it impossible wholly to disregard such a pattern. Setting out first for the door, he soon diverged toward the fireside; when near the ladies, he was suddenly seized with panic, and pulling out a red bandanna handkerchief from his pocket, gave a loud blast upon his nose, shot out of the door, and thus safely effected his retreat.

Mr. Niles died at Hartford in 1856, aged sixty-nine.

\* Mr. Storrs was a native of Middletown, Connecticut, and brother of the present Judge Storrs of that State. He was educated at Yale, and was there considered a dull scholar, yet he early became eminent as a lawyer and a statesman. He first settled at Utica, but afterward removed to the city of New York, where he died in 1837, aged forty-nine. He was distinguished for various acquirements, great powers of discrimination, remarkable logical exactness, and a ready and powerful elocution.

Island—a man of prodigious powers of sarcasm, and who made even John Randolph quail; Silas Wright of New York, ever courteous, ever smiling—a giant in strength, conquering his antagonists with such an air of good-humor as to reconcile them to defeat: these, and still others among the departed, live in my memory, and were there time and occasion, would furnish interesting themes of description and comment. Of those among the living—Crittenden, noted for his close argument and polished sarcasm; Benton of Missouri, who has fought his way through many prejudices, till he has attained the reputation of unrivaled industry, vast acquisitions, and an enlarged statesmanship; Bell of Tennessee, always dignified and commanding respect—these linger in my memory as connected with the senate-chamber, where indeed their chief laurels have been won. In the other house, I have often seen and heard Winthrop, Cushing, Wise, T. Marshall—all brilliant orators, and accustomed to “bring down the House,” when the spirit moved.

In the White House, I have seen Monroe and Adams, and Jackson and Van Buren, and Harrison and Tyler, and Taylor and Fillmore. How many memories rise up at the mention of these names—associated as they are in my mind with the brilliant throngs I have seen at their levees, or with the public events connected with their names, or the whirlpools of party strife which I have seen fretting and foaming at the periods of their election!

But I must forbear. A single domestic event claims to be recorded here, and I shall then take leave of Washington. I have told you that I had come hither with my family. Among them was one to whom existence had hitherto been only a bright, unbroken spring. Gifted, beautiful, healthful, happy—loving all and loved by all—he never suggested by his appearance, an idea but of life, and enjoyment, and success, and prosperity. Yet he was suddenly taken from us. We mourned, though remembrances were mingled with our grief which softened, if they could not wholly remove it.

## LETTER LVI.

*London and Paris compared—Paris thirty years ago—Louis XVIII.—The Parisians—Garden of the Tuileries—Washington Irving—Mr. Warden, the American Consul—Société Philomatique—Baron Larrey—Geoffroy St. Hilaire—The Institute—Arago—Lamarck—Gay-Lussac—Cuvier—Lacroix—Laplace—Laennec—Dupuytren—Tulma—Made-moiselle Mars.*

MY DEAR C\*\*\*\*\*

About the middle of April, 1851, I arrived in Paris, and soon after took charge of the Consulate there. As you know, I have frequently been in this gay city, and I now propose to gather up my recollections of it, and select therefrom a few items which may fill up the blank that yet remains in my story, and in some degree contribute to your amusement.

I first visited Paris in January, 1824, as I have told you. I had spent a month in London, which is always a rather gloomy place to a stranger, and in winter is peculiarly depressing. The people who have houses there, burrow into them, and lighting their coal fires, make themselves happy; but the wanderer from his country, shut out from these cheerful scenes, and forced into the streets, grimed with dirt and drizzle below and incumbered with bituminous fogs above, feels that he is in a dreary wilderness, where man and nature conspire to make him miserable and melancholy. In most great cities, there is something

to cheer the new-comer : it is precisely the reverse with London, and particularly at this dismal season. Its finest streets, its most sumptuous squares, even its noble monuments, which are not few, have always a rather dull aspect, and in the pitchy atmosphere of winter, they seem to be in mourning, and communicate their gloom to all around. St. Paul's, incrustated with soot and dripping with an inky deposit from the persistent fogs; Nelson's monument, black with coal-smoke, and clammy with the chill death-damp of the season,—all these things—the very ornaments and glories of the city—are positively depressing, and especially to an American, accustomed to the transparent skies, the white snow-drifts, the bracing, cheering atmosphere of his own winter climate.

Paris is the very opposite of London. The latter is an ordinary city, impressed by no distinctive characteristics, except its gloom and its vast extent. It is little more than twenty Liverpools, crowded together, and forming the most populous city in the world. Paris, on the contrary, is marked with prominent and peculiar traits, noticed at once by the most careless observer. On entering the streets, you are struck with the air of ornament and decoration which belongs to the architecture, the effect of which is heightened by the light color of the freestone, the universal building material. The sky is bright, and the people seem to reflect its cheerfulness. The public gar-

dens and squares, surrounded with monuments of art and teeming with men, women, and children, including abundance of rosy nurses and plump babies, all apparently bent on pleasure, and this, too, in mid-winter—are peculiar and striking features of this gay metropolis. To an American who has just left London, his heart heavy with hypochondria, Paris is indeed delightful, and soon restores him to his wonted cheerfulness.

At the time I first arrived here, this city was, however, very different from what it now is. Louis XVIII. was upon the throne, and had occupied it for nine years. During this period he had done almost nothing to repair the state of waste and dilapidation in which the allies had left it. These had taken down the statue of Napoleon on the column of the Place Vendôme, and left its pedestal vacant; the king had followed up the reform and erased the offensive name of the exiled emperor from the public monuments, and put his own, Louis XVIII., in their place; he had caused a few churches to be repaired, and some pictures of the Virgin to be painted and placed in their niches. But ghastly mounds of rubbish—the wrecks of demolished edifices—scattered heaps of stones at the foot of half-built walls of buildings, destined never to be completed,—these and other unsightly objects were visible on every hand, marking the recent history of Napoleon, overthrown in the midst of his mighty projects, and leaving his name and his

works to be desecrated alike by a foreign foe and a more bitter domestic adversary.

The king, Louis XVIII., was a man of good sense and liberal mind, for one of his race; but he was wholly unfit to administer the government. He was a sort of monster of obesity, and, at the time I speak of, having lost the use of his lower limbs, he could not walk, and was trundled about the palace of the Tuileries in a cripple's go-cart. I have often seen him let down in this, through the arch in the south-eastern angle of the palace, into his coach, and returning from his ride, again taken up, and all this more like a helpless barrel of beef than a sovereign. Had the allies intended to make legitimacy at once odious and ridiculous, they could not better have contrived it than by squatting down this obese, imbecile extinguisher upon the throne of France, as the successor of Napoleon!

The Parisians are, however, a philosophic race: as they could not help themselves, they did not spend their lives like children, in profitless poutings. They had their jokes, and among these, they were accustomed to call Louis Dix-huit, *Louis des huîtres*—a tolerable pun, which was equivalent to giving him the familiar title of Old Oyster Louis. Deeming it their birthright to have three or four hours of pleasure every day—whoever may be in power—they still frequented the promenades, the Boulevards, and the theaters. When, therefore, I first visited the gardens



of the Tuileries of a bright Sunday afternoon, and immediately after quitting the "dull fuliginous abyss" of London, the scene seemed to me like enchantment. I find my impressions thus chronicled in my notes :

" Weather fine, bright, and mild ; some shrubs still green, and many flowers yet in bloom ; jets of fountains playing in the sunshine ; too early in the day for a great throng, yet a great many people here ; all have a quiet, sauntering look ; hundreds of tidy nurses, with bare arms and neat caps on their heads, the children they carry about being richly dressed, their little rosy cheeks imbedded in lace ; the ladies tastefully attired, and walking with a peculiar air of grace—very sentimental and modest in their countenances—never look at you, as they do in London ; very provoking. There is no Sunday air in the scene, but rather that of a calm pleasure-day ; children are rolling hoops ; one boy making a dirt pie ; two dogs, which have probably been shut up for a week, having a glorious scamper ; wild-pigeons cooing above in the tree-tops ; sparrows hopping about on the green sod at the foot of the statues of Flora and Diana, and picking up crumbs of bread thrown to them by the children ; a number of old men in the sunshine, sheltered by a northern wall, reading newspapers ; several nurses there, sunning their babies ; palace of the Tuileries of an architecture never seen in America, but still imposing ; the Rue de Rivoli on the north,

superb ; the Place Louis Quinze,\* fine ; the mint and other edifices along the opposite bank of the Seine, beautiful. Wonderful place, this Paris ; different from any thing I have seen. It seems devised, in its sky, its edifices, its decorations, its ornaments, for a tasteful and pleasure-loving people. Even I, a wanderer, feel no sense of solitude, of isolation, here. London is repulsive, and seems continually to frown upon the stranger as an outcast ; Paris smiles upon him and welcomes him, and makes him feel at home. The genial spirit of the French nation speaks in this, its capital : just as the temper and spirit of John Bull seem to be built into the brick and mortar of the streets of London.”

I can not, perhaps, do better than to give you a few more passages from the hasty jottings I made at the time.

“February 6—Washington Irving returned our call. Strikingly mild and amiable ; dress—claret coat, rather more pigeon-tailed than the fashion at New York ; light waistcoat ; tights ; ribbed, flesh-colored silk stockings ; shoes, polished very bright. This a fashionable dress here. He spoke of many

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\* This is now the Place de la Concorde, and is one of the most beautiful squares in the world. In the center is the famous obelisk of Luxor : from this point four superb works of architecture are seen at the four cardinal points—to the west, through the avenue of the Champs *Élisées*, is the Arc de Triomphe de l'Etoile ; to the north, the Church of the Madeleine ; to the east, the Palace of the Tuileries ; to the south, the Chamber of Deputies.

things, all in a quiet manner, evidently with a fund of feeling beneath.

“ February 14—Went with Mr. Warden\* to a meeting of the ‘Société Philomatique,’ composed of members of the Institute; saw Fourier, the famous geometrician and physician; he accompanied Napoleon to Egypt; wears a great brown wig; a dull, clumsy speaker: Thénard, a famous chemist, associated with Gay-Lussac; looks about forty: Larrey; has long black hair parted on the forehead, with an air of gravity and solidity, mingled with simplicity; spoke slowly, but with great clearness. Bonaparte said he was the most honest man he ever knew. He accompanied the expedition to Egypt; is still a distinguished surgeon, and in full practice. Poisson, one of the first mathematicians in Europe; he has a very fine head and splendid eye—seems about forty-eight: Geoffroy St. Hilaire, a zoologist, second only to Cuvier; a bustling, smiling man, of very demonstrative manner; he had two huge fish-bones, which he used for the purpose of illustrating his observations. He was also in the Egyptian expedition, and contributed largely to its scientific results. He seemed about forty-eight, and was listened to with great

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\* Mr. David Bailie Warden, who had been Secretary of Legation when Gen. Armstrong was Minister to Holland, was at this time Consul of the United States at Paris. He was a native of Ireland, but had become an American citizen. He was a corresponding member of the Institute, and was a man of considerable scientific and literary acquirements. He wrote a clever History of the United States. He died at Paris in 1845, aged 67.

attention. Bosc, a celebrated agriculturist, botanist, &c., old, respectable, gentlemanly.

“The proceedings were conducted with order and simplicity, forming a striking contrast to the pompous declamation I heard in London, in the Academy of Arts, upon hatching eggs.

“February 16—Went with Mr. Warden to a meeting of the Institute, held in the Hotel Mazarin: one hundred and fifty members present. Arago, president; he is tall, broad-shouldered, and imposing in appearance, with a dark, swarthy complexion, and a black, piercing eye. Lamarek, the famous writer on natural history—old, infirm, blind—was led in by another member—a distinguished entomologist, whose name I have forgotten; Fontaine, the architect—tall, homely, and aged: Gay-Lussac, a renowned chemist, under forty, active, fiery in debate: Cuvier, rather a large man, red face, eyes small, very near-sighted; eyes near together and oddly appearing and disappearing; features acute, hair gray, long, and careless; he spoke several times, and with great pertinency and effect: Lacroix, the mathematician, old, and looks like a '76er: Laplace, the most famous living astronomer, tall, thin, and sharp-featured—reminded me of the portraits of Voltaire; he is about seventy-five, feeble, yet has all his mental faculties.

“The principal discussion related to gasometers, the police of Paris having asked the opinion of the Institute as to the safety of certain new kinds, lately

introduced. The subject excited great interest, and the debate was quite animated. Thénard, Gay-Lussac, Girard, Laplace, Cuvier, and others, engaged in the debate. Nearly all expressed themselves with great ease and even volubility. They were occasionally vehement, and when excited, several spoke at once, and the president was obliged often to ring his bell to preserve order.

“It was strange and striking to see so many old men, just on the borders of the grave, still retaining such ardor for science as to appear at a club like this, and enter with passion into all the questions that came up. Such a spectacle is not to be seen elsewhere, on the earth. The charms of science generally fade to the eye of threescore and ten; few passions except piety and avarice survive threescore. It is evident, in studying this association, that the highest and most ardent exercises of the mind are here stimulated by the desire of glory, which is the reward of success. One thing struck me forcibly in this assembly, and that was the utter absence of all French foppery in dress, among the members. Their attire was plain black, and generally as simple as that of so many New England clergymen.

“In the evening, went to the Théâtre Français, to see Talma in the celebrated tragedy of Sylla, by Jouy. Did not well understand the French, but could see that the acting was very masterly. Had expected a great deal of rant, but was agreeably disappointed. In

the more passionate parts there was a display of vigor, but at other times the performance was quiet and natural—without any of the stage-exaggeration I am accustomed to. Most of the scenes were such as might actually take place, under the circumstances indicated in the play. Talma is said to resemble Napoleon in person; he certainly looked very much like his portraits. His hair was evidently arranged to favor the idea of resemblance to the emperor. He is a very handsome man, and comes up to my idea of a great actor.

“February 20th—Went to see a new comedy by Casimir Delavigne, “*L'Ecole des Vieillards*.” Talma and Mademoiselle Mars played the two principal parts. The piece consisted of a succession of rather long dialogues, without any change of scenery. The whole theater had somewhat the quiet elegance of a parlor. There were no noisy disturbers; there was no vulgarity—no boisterous applause. The actors appeared like groups of genteel people, conversing, as we see them in actual life. There was nothing very exciting in the situations, nothing highly romantic in the plot or denouement. The interest of the play consisted in playful wit, sparkling repartee, and light satire upon life and society—represented by the most beautiful acting I have ever seen. Talma is inimitable in the character of a refined but somewhat imbecile man, who has passed the prime of life; and Mademoiselle Mars is, beyond comparison, the most graceful and



pleasing of actresses. I am struck with the strict propriety, the refinement even of the manners of the audience. The whole entertainment seems, indeed, to be founded upon a very different idea from that of the English stage, which is largely adapted to delight the coarse tastes of the pit. Here the pit—called the parterre—is filled with people of refinement.

“February 21st—Went to the Hospital of La Charité. Saw Laennec, with his pupils, visiting the patients. He makes great use of the stethoscope, which is a wooden tube applied to the body, and put to the ear: by the sound, the state of the lungs and the vital organs is ascertained. It is like a telescope, by which the interior of the body is perceived, only that the ear is used instead of the eye. It is deemed a great improvement. Laennec is the inventor, and has high reputation in the treatment of diseases of the chest. He has learned to ascertain the condition of the lungs by thumping on the breast and back of the patient, and putting the ear to the body at the same time. He is a little man, five feet three inches high, and thin as a shadow. However, he has acute features, and a manner which bespeaks energy and consciousness of power.

“The whole hospital was neat and clean; bedsteads of iron. French medical practice very light; few medicines given; nursing is a great part of the treatment. Laennec’s pupils followed him from patient to patient. He conversed with them in Latin.



One of the patients was a handsome, black-eyed girl, not very sick. All the young men must apply the stethoscope to her chest; she smiled, and seemed to think it all right.

"Same day, went to the Hotel Dieu, a medical and surgical hospital. Saw Dupuytren and his pupils, visiting the patients. He is a rather large man, of a fine Bonapartean head, but sour, contumelious looks. He holds the very first rank as a surgeon. His operations are surprisingly bold and skillful. Edward C...., of Philadelphia, who is here studying medicine, told me a good anecdote of him. He has a notion that he can instantly detect hydrocephalus in a patient, from the manner in which he carries his head. One day, while he was in the midst of his scholars at the hospital, he saw a common sort of man standing at a distance, among several persons who had come for medical advice. Dupuytren's eye fell upon him, and he said to his pupils—"Do you see yonder, that fellow that has his hand to his face, and carries his head almost on his shoulder? Now, take notice: that man has hydrocephalus. Come here, my good fellow!"

"The man thus called, came up. 'Well,' said Dupuytren—"I know what ails you; but come, tell us about it yourself. What is the matter with you?"

"'I've got the toothache!' was the reply.

"'Take that'—said Dupuytren, giving him a box on the ear—"and go to the proper department and have it pulled out!"

## LETTER LVII.

*Death of Louis XVIII.—Charles X.—The “Three Glorious Days”—Louis Philippe—The Revolution of February, 1848.*

MY DEAR C\*\*\*\*\*

I was again in Paris in the summer of 1832. Great changes had taken place since 1824: Louis XVIII. was dead; Charles X. had succeeded, and after a brief reign had been driven away by the revolution of the “Three Glorious Days.” Louis Philippe was now on the throne. On the 29th of July, and the two following days, we saw the celebration of the event which had thus changed the dynasty of France. It consisted of a grand fête, in the Champs Elysées, closed by a most imposing military spectacle, in which eighty thousand troops, extending from the Arc de Triomphe to the Place Vendôme, marched before the admiring throng. Louis Philippe was himself on horseback as commander-in-chief, and such was his popularity among the masses that, in many instances, I saw men in blouses rush up and grasp his hand, and insist upon shaking it. Sixteen years after, I saw him hustled into a cab, and flying from the mob for his life—his family scattered, and he but too happy to get safe to England in the disguise of a sailor!

As I have told you, I established my family in

Paris in 1846; that winter and the following I was also there. I remember that on a certain Monday in February, 1848, I went up to see our countrywoman, the Marchioness Lavalette, to arrange with her about an introduction she had promised me to Guizot. She was not at home, but as I was coming down the hill from the Place St. George, I met her in her carriage. She asked me to walk back to her house, and I did so. I observed that she was much agitated, and asked her the cause. "We are going to have trouble!" said she. "I have just been to the Chambers: the ministry have determined to stop the meeting of the liberals to-morrow; the proclamation is already being printed."

"Well, and what then?" said I.

"Another 'Three Glorious Days!'"

To this I replied that I conceived her fears groundless; that Louis Philippe appeared to me strong in the confidence of the people; that he was noted for his prudence and sagacity; that Guizot, his prime minister, was a man of great ability; that the whole cabinet, indeed, were distinguished for their judgment and capacity. The lady shook her head, and rejoined—

"I know Paris better than you do. We are on the eve of an earthquake!"

Soon after this I took my leave. What speedily ensued, may best be told in a letter I addressed to a friend in Boston, and which was as follows:

PARIS, March 14th, 1848.

As it has been my fortune to be in Paris, and an observer of many of the most stirring and striking occurrences during the late revolution, I propose to give you a brief consecutive narrative of what I saw and heard, embracing a sketch of other leading events. My purpose will be to take you with me, and make you a participator, as far as possible, in the scenes witnessed and emotions experienced by one who was on the spot.

Before I begin, it may be well to state a few particulars as to the political condition of France at the moment of the revolt. It is well known that Louis Philippe accepted the crown at the hands of Lafayette, after the struggle of July, 1830, the latter saying, as he presented the king and charter to the people—“We give you the best of monarchies—the best of republics!” The circumstances, all considered, pledged Louis Philippe to a liberal government, in which the good of the people should be the supreme object, and the popular will the predominating element.

He commenced his career under fair auspices, and for a time every thing promised a happy fulfillment of what seemed his duty and his destiny. But by degrees a great change came over the monarch; the possession of power seduced his heart, and turned his head; and forgetting his pledges, and blind to his true interest, he set himself to building up a dynasty that should hand down his name and fame to posterity.

It seemed, at a superficial glance, that he might realize his dream. He had acquired the reputation of being the most sagacious monarch of his time. He had improved and embellished the capital; on all sides his “image and superscription” were seen in connection with statues, fountains, edifices, and works of beauty and utility. France was happier than the adjacent countries. The famine and the pestilence, that had recently desolated neighboring states, had trod more lightly here. The king was blessed with a large family. These had all reached maturity, and were allied to kings and queens, princes and prin-

cesses. The upholders of the crown in the parliament, were men whose names alone were a tower of strength. Peace reigned at home, and the army abroad had just succeeded in achieving a signal triumph over an enemy that had baffled them for seventeen years.\*

Such was the outward seeming of affairs; but there were threatening fires within, which might at any moment produce a conflagration. Many thinking people were profoundly disgusted with the retrograde tendency of the government, with the corruption of its officers, the gradual subsidizing of the legislature by the crown, and the concentration of all the powers of the state in the hands of one man, who was now using them for family aggrandizement. Although the march of despotism had been cautious and stealthy, the plainest mind could see, and indeed the people generally began to feel, many galling evidences of the tyranny to which they had become actually subjected.

Among these grievances, were the constant increase of the national debt, and consequent increase of taxation, with the restraints put upon the liberty of the press and of speech. By a law of some years' standing, the people were prohibited from holding stated meetings of more than twenty persons, without license; and *reform banquets*, or meetings for the discussion of public affairs--of which about seventy had been held, in different parts of the kingdom, within the last year--were now pronounced illegal by the ministry. Finally, a determination to suppress one of them, about to be held in the twelfth ward of Paris, was solemnly announced by them in the Chamber of Deputies.

It is material to bear in mind, that there are always in this metropolis at least one hundred thousand workmen, who live from day to day upon their labor, and who, upon the slightest check to trade, are plunged into poverty, if not starvation. At the moment of which we are speaking, this immense body of

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\* Abd-el-Kadir, who had been the indomitable leader of the Arabs of the Desert, against the French, who had conquered Algiers, surrendered to Gen. Lamoricière, December 22d, 1847.

men, with their families, were suffering sorely from the stagnation of business in the capital. There were not less than two hundred thousand persons who, for the space of three months, had hardly been able to obtain sufficient food to appease the cravings of hunger. How easy to stir up these people to rebellion!—how natural for them to turn their indignation against the king and his government! The opposition members seized the occasion now afforded them, to excite these discontented masses against the ministry; and it may be added that the latter, by their rashness, did more than their enemies to prepare the mine and set the match to the train.

The crisis was now at hand. The opposition deputies declared their intention to attend the proposed meeting; and in spite of the threats of the ministry, the preparations for the banquet went vigorously on. A place was selected in the Champs Elysées, and a building was in progress of erection for the celebration. The programme of the same was announced, the toast for the occasion was published, the orator, O. Barrot, selected. The day was fixed—an ominous day for tyranny—an auspicious one for human freedom. It was the 22d of February, the birthday of Washington! Whether it has received a new title to its place in the calendar of liberty, must be left for the decision of time.

The evening of the 21st came, and then proclamations were issued by the co-operation of the ministry and the police, prohibiting the banquet. This act, though it had been threatened, still fell like a thunderbolt upon the people. It was known that an immense military force had been quietly assembled in Paris and the vicinity—eighty thousand troops, with artillery and ample munitions—and that the garrisons around the Tuileries had been victualed as if for a siege. But it had not been believed that an attempt to stifle the voice of the people, so bold as this, would really be made. Yet such was the fact. The leaders of the opposition receded from their ground, and it was announced, in the papers of the 22d, that the banquet, being forbidden by the government, would not take place!



The morning of this day was dark and drizzly. I had anticipated some manifestation of uneasiness, and at half-past nine o'clock went forth. Groups of people were reading the proclamations posted up at the corners of the streets, but all was tranquil. I walked along the Boulevards for a mile, yet saw no symptoms of the coming storm.

The designated place of meeting for the banquet was the square of the Madeleine. This is at the western extremity of the Boulevards, and near the great central square, called the Place de la Concorde—a point communicating directly with the Chamber of Deputies, the Champs Elysées, the gardens of the Tuileries, &c. At eleven o'clock, A. M., a dark mass was seen moving along the Boulevards, toward the proposed place of meeting. This consisted of thousands of workmen from the faubourgs. In a few moments the entire square of the Madeleine was filled with these persons, dressed almost exclusively in their characteristic costume, which consists of a blue tunic, called *blouse*—a garment which is made very much in the fashion of our farmers' frocks.

The opening scene of the drama had now begun. The mass rushed and eddied around the Madeleine, which, by the way, is the finest church and the finest edifice in Paris. Such was the threatening aspect of the scene, that the shops were all suddenly shut, and the people around began to supply themselves with bread and other food, for "three days." In a few moments, the avalanche took its course down the Rue Royale, swept across the Place de la Concorde, traversed the bridge over the Seine, and collected in swelling and heaving masses in the Place, or square, before the Chamber of Deputies. This building is defended in front by a high iron railing. The gate of this was soon forced, and some hundreds of the people rushed up the long flight of steps, and pausing beneath the portico, struck up the song of the Marseillaise—a song, by the way, interdicted by law on account of its exciting character. The crowd here rapidly increased; shouts, songs, cries, filled the air. East and west,



along the quays, and through the streets behind the Chamber, came long lines of students from the various schools. Standing upon one of the pillars of the bridge, I commanded a view of the whole scene. It was one to fill the heart with the liveliest emotions. A hundred thousand people were now collected, seeming like an agitated sea, and sending forth a murmur resembling the voice of many waters. From the southern gate of the Tuileries now issued two bodies of troops—one, on horseback, coming along the northern quay. These were the Municipal Guard, a magnificent corps, richly caparisoned, and nobly mounted. Being picked men, and well paid, they were the chief reliance of the government, and for that very reason were hated by the people. The other body of troops were infantry of the line, and crossing the Pont Royal, came along the southern bank of the river. Both detachments approached the multitude, and crowding upon them with a slow advance, succeeded at last in clearing the space before the Chamber.

The greater part of the throng recrossed the bridge, and spread themselves over the Place de la Concorde. This square, perhaps the most beautiful in the world, is about five acres in extent. In the center is the far-famed obelisk of Luxor; on either side of this is a splendid fountain, which was in full action during the scenes we describe. To the east is the garden of the Tuileries; to the west are the Champs Elysées. This vast area, so associated with art, and luxury, and beauty, was now crowded with an excited populace, mainly of the working classes. Their number constantly augmented, and bodies of troops, foot and horse, arrived from various quarters, till the square was literally covered. The number of persons here collected in one mass was over one hundred thousand.

At the commencement, the mob amused themselves with songs, shouts, and pasquinades; but in clearing the space before the Chamber, and driving the people across the bridge, the guards had displayed great rudeness. They pressed upon the masses, and one woman was crushed to death beneath the hoofs

of the horses. Pebbles now began to be hurled at the troops from the square. Dashing in among the people, sword in hand, the cavalry drove them away; but as they cleared one spot, another was immediately filled. The effect of this was to chafe and irritate the mob, who now began to seize sticks and stones and hurl them in good earnest at their assailants.

While this petty war was going on, some thousands of the rioters dispersed themselves through the Champs Elysées, and began to build barricades across the main avenue. The chairs, amounting to many hundreds, were immediately disposed in three lines across the street. Benches, trellises, boxes, fences—every movable thing within reach—were soon added to these barricades. An omnibus passing by was captured, detached from the horses, and tumbled into one of the lines. The flag was taken from the Panorama near by, and a vast procession paraded through the grounds, singing the *Marseillaise*, the *Pari-sienne*, and other patriotic airs.

Meanwhile, a small detachment of footguards advanced to the scene of action; but they were pelted with stones, and took shelter in their guard-house. This was assailed with a shower of missiles, which rattled like hail upon its roof. The windows were dashed in, and a heap of brush near by was laid to the wall and set on fire. A body of horse-guards soon arrived and dispersed the rioters; but the latter crossed to the northern side of the Champs Elysées, attacked another guard-house, and set it on fire. A company of the line came to the spot, but the mob cheered them, and they remained inactive. The revel proceeded, and, in the face of the soldiers, the people fed the fire with fuel from the surrounding trees and fences, sang their songs, cracked their jokes, and cried, "Down with Guizot!"—"Vive la Reforme!" &c. In these scenes the boys took the lead—performing the most desperate feats, and inspiring the rest by their intrepidity. A remarkable air of fun and frolic characterized the mob—wit flew as freely on all sides as stones and sticks. every missile seemed winged with a joke.

Such was the course of events the first day, so far as they fell under my own observation. It appears from the papers that similar proceedings, though in some cases of a more serious character, took place elsewhere. Great masses of people gathered at various points. They made hostile demonstrations before the office of Foreign Affairs, crying out, "Down with Guizot!" Some person called for the minister. "He is not here," said one; "he is with the Countess Lieven"—a remark which the habitués of Paris will understand as conveying a keen satire. At other points, a spirit of insubordination was manifested. Bakers' shops were broken open, armories forced, and barricades begun. Everywhere the hymn of the Marseillaise, and Dumas' touching death-song of the Girondins, were sung—often by hundreds of voices, and with thrilling effect. The rappel, for calling out the National Guard, was beaten in several quarters. As night closed in, heavy masses of soldiery, horse and foot, with trains of artillery, were seen at various points. The Place du Carrousel was full of troops, and at evening they were there reviewed by the king, and the Dukes of Nemours and Montpensier. Six thousand soldiers were disposed along the Boulevards, from the Madeleine to the Porte St. Martin. Patrols were seen in different quarters during the whole night. About twelve, tranquillity reigned over the city, disturbed only in a few remote and obscure places by the building of barricades, the arrest of rioters, and one or two combats, in which several persons were killed. Such was the first day's work—the prelude to the mighty drama about to follow.

Wednesday, the 23d, was fair, with dashes of rain at intervals, as in our April. I was early abroad, and soon noticed that companies of National Guards were on duty. Only regular troops had been called out the day before—a fact which showed the distrust entertained by the king of the National Guards. This was remarked by the latter, and was doubtless one of the causes which hastened the destruction of the government.

At nine o'clock, I passed up the Boulevards. Most of the

shops were shut, and an air of uneasiness prevailed among the people. At the Porte St. Denis, there was a great throng, and a considerable mass of troops. Barricades were soon after erected in the streets of St. Denis, Clery, St. Eustache, Cadran, &c. Several fusilades took place between the people at these points and the soldiers, and a number of persons were killed.

Some contests occurred in other quarters during the morning. At two o'clock, the Boulevards, the Rues St. Denis, St. Martin, Montmartre, St. Honoré—in short, all the great thoroughfares—were literally crammed with people. Bodies of horse and foot, either stationary or patrolling, were everywhere to be seen. It was about this time that some officers of the National Guard ordered their men to fire, but they refused. In one instance, four hundred National Guards were seen marching, in uniform, but without arms. It became evident that the soldiers generally were taking part with the people. This news was carried to the Palace, and Count Molé was called in to form a new ministry. He undertook the task, and orders were immediately given to spread the intelligence of this through the city.

Meanwhile the riot and revel went on in various quarters. The police were active, and hundreds of persons were arrested and lodged in prison. Skirmishes took place, here and there, between the soldiers and the people; long processions were seen, attended by persons who sang choruses, and shouted, "Down with Guizot!"—"Vive la reforme!"

About four o'clock, the news of the downfall of the Guizot ministry was spread along the Boulevards. The joyful intelligence ran over the city with the speed of light. It was everywhere received with acclamations. The people and the troops, a short time before looking at each other in deadly hostility, were seen shaking hands, and expressing congratulations. An immense population—men, women, and children—poured into the Boulevards, to share in the jubilation. Large parties of the National Guard paraded the streets, the officers and men shouting, "Vive la reforme!" and the crowd cheering loudly. Bands

of five hundred to fifteen hundred men and boys went about making noisy demonstrations of joy. On being met by the troops, they divided to let them pass, and immediately resumed their cries and their songs.

Toward half-past six o'clock in the evening, an illumination was spoken of, and many persons lighted up spontaneously. The illumination soon became more general, and the populace, in large numbers, went through the streets, calling, "Light up!" Numerous bands, alone, or following detachments of the National Guards, went about, shouting, "Vive le roi!"—"Vive la reforme!" and singing the Marseillaise. At many points, where barricades had been erected, and the people were resisting the troops, they ceased when they heard the news of the resignations, and the troops retired. "It is all over!" was the general cry, and a feeling of relief seemed to pervade every bosom.

There can be no doubt that, but for a fatal occurrence which soon after took place, the further progress of the revolt might have been stayed. Many wise people now say, indeed, that the revolution was all planned beforehand; they had foreseen and predicted it; and from the beginning of the outbreak every thing tended to this point. The fact is unquestionably otherwise. The "Opposition," with their various clubs and societies distributed through all classes in Paris, and holding constant communication with the workmen, or blousemen, no doubt stood ready to take advantage of any violence on the part of the government which might justify resistance; but they had not anticipated such a contingency on the present occasion. It is not probable that the Molé ministry, had it been consummated, would have satisfied the people; but the king had yielded; Guizot, the special object of hatred, had fallen, and it was supposed that further concessions would be made, as concession had been begun. But accident, which often rules the fate of empires and dynasties, now stepped in to govern the course of events, and give them a character which should astonish the world.

In the course of the evening, a large mass of people had collected on the Boulevard, in the region of Guizot's office—the Hôtel des Affaires Etrangères. The troops here had unfortunately threatened the people, by rushing at them with fixed bayonets, after the announcement of the resignation of the ministry, and when a good feeling prevailed among all classes. This irritated the mob, and was partly, no doubt, the occasion of the large gathering in this quarter. For some reason, not well explained, a great many troops had also assembled here and in the vicinity. At ten o'clock, the street from the Madeleine to the Rue de la Paix, was thronged with soldiers and people. There was, however, no riot, and no symptom of disorder.

At this moment, a collection of persons, mostly young men, about sixty in number, came along the Boulevard, on the side opposite to the soldiers and the Foreign Office. It is said that the colonel anticipated some attack, though nothing of the kind was threatened. It appears that the soldiers stood ready to fire, when one of their muskets went off,\* and wounded the commander's horse in the leg. He mistook this for a shot from the crowd, and gave instant orders to fire. A fusilade immediately followed. Twenty persons fell dead, and forty were wounded. The scene which ensued baffles description. The immense masses dispersed in terror, and carried panic in all directions. The groans of the dying and the screams of the wounded filled the air. Shops and houses around were turned into hospitals. "We are betrayed! we are betrayed!"—"Revenge! revenge!" was the cry of the masses.

From this moment the doom of the monarchy was sealed. The leaders of the clubs, no doubt, took their measures for revolution. An immense wagon was soon brought to the scene of the massacre; the dead bodies were laid on it, and flaring torches were lighted over it. The ghastly spectacle was para-

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\* It has since been said, and is generally believed, that a revolutionist by the name of Lagrange fired this shot with a pistol, having expected and designed the events which immediately followed.



ded through the streets, and the mute lips of the corpses doubtless spoke more effectively than those of the living. Large masses of people, pale with excitement, and uttering execrations upon the murderers, followed in the train of the wagon, as it passed through the more populous streets of the city, and especially in those quarters inhabited by the lower classes. The effect was such as might have been anticipated. At midnight, the barricades were begun, and at sunrise, the streets of Paris displayed a net-work of fortifications from the place St. George to the church of Notre Dame, which set the troops at defiance. More than a thousand barricades, some of them ten feet in height, were thrown up during that memorable night; yet such were the suddenness and silence of the operations, that most of the inhabitants of the city slept in security, fondly dreaming that the tempest had passed, and that the morning would greet them in peace.

On Thursday, the decisive day, the weather was still mild, and without rain, though the sky was dimmed with clouds. At eleven in the morning, I sallied forth. I can not express my astonishment at the scene. The whole Boulevard was a spectacle of desolation. From the Rue de la Paix to the Rue Montmartre—the finest part of Paris, the glory of the city—every tree was cut down, all the public monuments reduced to heaps of ruins, the pavements torn up, and the entire wreck tumbled into a succession of barricades. Every street leading into this portion of the Boulevard was strongly barricaded. Such giant operations seemed like the work of enchantment.

But my wonder had only begun. At the point where the Rue Montmartre crosses the Boulevard, the entire pavement was torn up, and something like a square breastwork was formed, in which a cannon was planted. The whole space around was crowded with the populace. As I stood for a moment, surveying the scene, a young man, about twenty, passed through the crowd, and stepping upon the carriage of the cannon, cried out, "Down with Louis Philippe!" The energy with which



this was spoken sent a thrill through every bosom; and the remarkable appearance of the youth gave additional effect to his words. He seemed the very demon of revolution. He was short, broad-shouldered, and full-chested. His face was pale, his cheek spotted with blood, and his head, without hat or cap, was bound with a handkerchief. His features were keen, and his deep-set eye was lit with a spark that seemed borrowed from a tiger. As he left the throng, he came near me, and I said, inquiringly, "Down with Louis Philippe?" "Yes!" was his reply. "And what then?" said I. "A republic!" was his answer; and he passed on, giving the watchword of "Down with Louis Philippe!" to the masses he encountered. This was the first instance in which I heard the overthrow of the king, and the adoption of a republic proposed.

In pursuing my walk, I noticed that the population were now abundantly supplied with weapons. On the two first days they were unarmed; but after the slaughter at the Foreign Office, they went to all the houses and demanded weapons. These were given, for refusal would have been vain. An evidence of the consideration of the populace, even in their hour of wrath, is furnished by the fact, that in all cases where the arms had been surrendered, they wrote on the doors in chalk, "*Armes données*"—arms given up—so as to prevent the annoyance of a second call.

It might seem a fearful thing to behold a mob, such as that of Paris, brandishing guns, fowling-pieces, swords, cutlasses, hatchets, and axes; but I must say that I felt not the slightest fear in passing among their thickest masses. Some of them, who had doubtless never handled arms before, seemed a little jaunty and jubilant. The *Gamins*, a peculiar race of enterprising, daring, desperate boys—the leaders in riots, rows, and rebellions—were swarming on all sides, and seemed to feel a head taller in the possession of their weapons. I saw several of these unwashed imps strutting about with red sashes around the waist, supporting pistols, dirks, cutlasses, &c.; yet I must state

that over the whole scene there was an air of good-breeding, which seemed a guaranty against insult or violence. I may also remark here, that during the whole three days, I did not observe a scuffle or wrangle among the people; I did not hear an insulting word, nor did I see a menace offered—save in conflicts between the soldiers and the populace. I can add, that I did not see a drunken person during the whole period, with the single exception which I shall hereafter mention.

I took a wide circuit in the region of the Rue Montmartre, the Bourse, the Rue Vivienne, St. Honoré, and the Palais Royal. Everywhere there were enormous barricades and crowds of armed people. Soon after—that is, about twelve o'clock—I passed the southern quadrangle of the Palais Royal, which—lately the residence of the brother of the King of Naples—was now attacked and taken by the populace. The beautiful suit of rooms were richly furnished, and decorated with costly pictures, statues, bronzes, and other specimens of art. These were unsparingly tumbled into the square and the street, and consigned to the flames.\* At the distance of one hundred and fifty feet from the front of the Palais Royal, was the Châteaueau d'Eau, a massive stone building occupied as a barrack, and at this moment garrisoned by one hundred and eighty municipal guards. In most parts of the city, seeing that the troops fraternized with the people, the government had given them orders not to fire. These guards, however, attacked the insurgents in and about the Palais Royal. Their fire was returned, and a desperate conflict ensued. The battle lasted for more than an hour, the people rushing in the very face of the

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\* Many occurrences, during the revolution, served to display, on the part of the people, commonly, but injuriously, called the *mob*, sentiments not inferior in beauty and elevation to those handed down for centuries in the histories of ancient Greece and Rome. During the sacking of the Palais Royal, the insurgents found an ivory crucifix. In the very heat of their fury against tyranny, they reverently paused, and taking the sacred emblem of their faith, bore it to the old church of St. Roch, where it was safely deposited.

muskets of the guard, as they blazed from the grated windows. At last the barrack was set on fire, and the guard yielded, though not till many of their number had fallen, and the rest were nearly dead with suffocation. The Château d'Eau is now a mere ruin, its mottled walls giving evidence of the shower of bullets that had been poured upon it.\*

No sooner had the Château d'Eau surrendered, than the flushed victors took their course toward the Tuileries, which was near at hand ; shouting, singing, roaring, they came like a surge, bearing all before them. The Place du Carrousel was filled with troops, but not a sword was unsheathed—not a bayonet pointed—not a musket or a cannon fired. There stood, idle and motionless, the mighty armament which the king had appointed for his defense. How vain had his calculations proved ! for, alas ! they were founded in a radical error ! The soldiers would not massacre their brethren, to sustain a throne which they now despised !

But we must now enter the Tuileries. For several days previous to the events we have described, some anxiety had been entertained by persons in and about the palace. The king, however, had no fears. He appeared in unusual spirits, and if any intimation of danger was given, he turned it aside with a sneer or a joke. Even so late as Wednesday, after he had called upon Count Molé to form a new ministry, he remarked, that he was so “firmly seated in the saddle, that nothing could throw him off.”

Molé soon found it impossible, with the materials at hand, to construct a ministry. Thiers was then called in, and after a long course of higgling and chaffering on the part of the king, it was agreed that he and Barrot should undertake to carry on

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\* In the recent improvements in Paris, the ruins of the Chateau d'Eau have been removed, and a square has been opened upon their site from the Palais Royal to the new portions of the Louvre. These and other alterations have rendered this one of the most beautiful quarters of the city. The Louvre and the Tuileries have been united, and now form one of the most magnificent palaces in Europe.

the government. This was announced by them in person, as they rode through the streets on Thursday morning. These concessions, however, came too late. The cry for a republic was bursting from the lips of the million. The abdication of the king was decreed, and a raging multitude were demanding this at the very gates of the palace. Overborne by the crisis, the king agreed to abdicate in favor of the Duke de Nemours. Some better tidings were brought him, and he retracted what he had just done. A moment after, it became certain that the insurgents would shortly burst into the palace. In great trepidation, the king agreed to resign the crown in favor of his grandson, the young Count de Paris—yet, still clinging to hope, he shuffled and hesitated before he would put his name to the act of abdication. This, however, was at last done, and the king and queen, dressed in black, and accompanied by a few individuals who remained faithful in this trying moment, passed from the Tuileries to the Place de la Concorde, through the subterranean passage constructed many years previously for the walks of the infant king of Rome. They here entered a small one-horse vehicle, and after a rapid and successful flight, landed safely at Dover, in England.\*

Meanwhile, the mob had seized the royal carriages, fourteen in number, and made a bonfire of them, near the celebrated arch in the Place du Carrousel. Soon after, they forced the railing at several points, and came rushing across the square toward the palace. Scarcely had the various members of the royal family time to escape on one side of the building, when the mob broke in at the other.

I have not time to follow the adventures of these several individuals. We can not but sympathize with them in their misfortunes; but we may remark, that the fall of the Orleans dy-

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\* The various members of the royal family, having escaped to England, established themselves at Claremont, near London, where they have continued till this time. Louis Philippe died there the 22d of August, 1850.

nasty was not broken by a single act of courage or dignity on the part of any one of the family. Their flight seemed a vulgar scramble for mere life. Even the king was reduced to the most common-place disguises—the shaving of his whiskers, the change of his dress, the adopting an “alias!” I may add here, that they have all escaped; and while everybody seems glad of this, there is no one behind who mourns their loss. None are more loud in denouncing the besotted confidence of the king, than his two hundred and twenty-five purchased deputies, who were so loyal in the days of prosperity.

We must now turn our attention toward another scene—the Chamber of Deputies. This body met on Tuesday, at the usual hour—twelve o’clock. While the riotous scenes we have described were transpiring during that day, in full view of the place where they had assembled, the deputies, as if in mockery of the agitation without, were occupied in a languid discussion upon the affairs of a broken country bank. Toward the close of the sitting, Odillon Barrot read from the tribune a solemn act of impeachment of the ministers. The next day, Wednesday, the Chamber again met, and Guizot in the afternoon announced that Count Molé was attempting to form a new ministry. It does not appear that Guizot or his colleagues were afterward seen in the Chamber. It is said that they met at the house of Duchatel on Thursday morning, and after consultation adopted the significant motto of Napoleon after the battle of Waterloo—“*Sauve qui peut!*”—Save himself who can. I am happy to add that the fugitives seem to have made good their retreat. It is said that Soult, disdaining to fly, remains at his house. I need not say that he will not be molested, for there is no sanguinary feeling toward any one, and Napoleon’s old favorite, the victor in so many battles, would more readily find a Parisian populace to protect than injure him.

A short time after the king and queen had passed the Place de la Concorde, I chanced to be there. In a few moments Odillon Barrot appeared from the gate of the Tuileries, and, follow-

ed by a long train of persons, proceeded to the Chamber of Deputies. It was now understood that the king had abdicated, and that Thiers and Barrot were to propose the Count de Paris as king, under the regency of his mother, the Duchess of Orleans. The most profound emotion seemed to occupy the immense multitude. All were hushed into silence by the rapid succession of astonishing events. After a short space, the Duchess of Orleans, with her two sons, the Count de Paris and the Duke de Chartres, were seen on foot coming toward the Chamber, encircled by a strong escort. She was dressed in deep mourning, her face bent to the ground. She moved across the bridge, and passing to the rear of the building, entered it through the gardens. Shortly after this, the Duke de Nemours, attended by several gentlemen on horseback, rode up, and also entered the building.

The scene that ensued within, is said to have presented an extraordinary mixture of the solemn and the ludicrous. The duchess being present, O. Barrot proceeded to state the abdication of the king, and to propose the regency. It was then that Lamartine seemed to shake off the poet and philosopher, and suddenly to become a man of action. Seizing the critical moment, he declared his conviction that the days of monarchy were numbered, that the proposed regency was not suited to the crisis, and that a republic alone would meet the emergency and the wishes of France. These opinions, happily expressed and strenuously enforced, became decisive in their effect.

Several other speeches were made, and a scene of great confusion followed. A considerable number of the mob had broken into the room, and occupied the galleries and the floor. One of them brought his firelock to his shoulder, and took aim at M. Sauzet, the president. Entirely losing his self-possession, he abdicated with great speed, and disappeared. In the midst of the hubbub, a provisional government was announced, and the leading members were named. Some of the more obnoxious deputies were aimed at by the muskets of the mob, and skulk-



ing behind benches and pillars, they oozed out at back doors and windows. A blouseman came up to the Duke de Nemours, who drew his sword. The man took it from him, broke it over his knee, and counseled his highness to depart. This he did forthwith, having borrowed a coat and hat for the purpose of disguise. A call was made for the members of the provisional government to proceed to the Hotel de Ville. The assembly broke up, and the curtain fell upon the last sitting of the Chamber of Deputies—the closing scene of Louis Philippe's government.

It was about three o'clock in the afternoon, that I retraced my steps toward the Tuileries. The Place de la Concorde was crowded with soldiers, and fifty cannon were ranged in front of the gardens. Yet this mighty force seemed struck with paralysis. Long lines of infantry stood mute and motionless, and heavy masses of cavalry seemed converted into so many statues. Immediately before the eyes of these soldiers was the palace of the Tuileries in full possession of the mob, but not a muscle moved for their expulsion!

Passing into the gardens, I noticed that thousands of persons were spread over their surface, and a rattling discharge of fire-arms was heard on all sides. Looking about for the cause of this, I perceived that hundreds of men and boys were amusing themselves with shooting sparrows and pigeons, which had hitherto found a secure resting-place in this favorite resort of leisure and luxury. Others were discharging their muskets for the mere fun of making a noise. Proceeding through the gardens, I came at last to the palace. It had now been, for more than an hour, in full possession of the insurgents. All description fails to depict a scene like this. The whole front of the Tuileries, one-eighth of a mile in length, seemed gushing at doors, windows, balconies, and galleries, with living multitudes—a mighty beehive of men, in the very act of swarming. A confused hubbub filled the air and bewildered the senses with its chaotic sounds.

At the moment I arrived, the throne of the king was borne away by a jubilant band of revelers; and after being paraded through the streets, was burned at the Place de la Bastille—a significant episode in this tale of wonders. The colossal statue of Spartacus, which faces the main door of the palace, toward the gardens, was now decorated with a piece of gilt cloth torn from the throne and wreathed like a turban around his head. In his hand was a gorgeous bouquet of artificial flowers. It seemed as if the frowning gladiator had suddenly caught the spirit of the revel, and was about to descend from his pedestal and mingle in the masquerade.

I entered the palace, and passed through the long suites of apartments devoted to occasions of ceremony. A year before, I had seen these gorgeous halls filled with the flush and the fair, kings, princes, and nobles, gathered to this focal point of luxury, refinement, and taste, from every quarter of the world. How little did Louis Philippe, at that moment, dream of “coming events!” How little did the stately queen—a proud obelisk of silk, and lace, and diamonds—foresee the change that was at hand! I recollected well the effect of this scene upon my own mind, and felt the full force of the contrast which the present moment offered. In the very room where I had seen the pensive and pensile Princess de Joinville and the Duchess de Montpensier—the latter then fresh from the hymeneal altar, her raven hair studded with diamonds like evening stars—whirling in the mazy dance, I now beheld a band of creatures like Calibans, gamboling to the song of the Marseillaise!

On every side my eye fell upon scenes of destruction. Passing to the other end of the palace, I beheld a mob in the chambers of the princesses. Some rolled themselves in the luscious beds, others anointed their shaggy heads with choice pomatum, exclaiming, “Dieu! how sweet it smells!” One of the gamins, grimed with gunpowder, blood, and dirt, seized a tooth-brush, and placing himself before a mirror, seemed delighted at the manifest improvement which he produced upon his ivory.

On leaving the palace, I saw numbers of the men drinking wine from bottles taken from the well-stocked cellars. None of them were positively drunk. To use the words of Tam O'Shanter, "They were na fou, but just had plenty"—perhaps a little more. They flourished their guns and pistols, brandished their swords, and performed various antics, but they offered no insult to any one. They seemed in excellent humor, and made more than an ordinary display of French politesse. They complimented the women, of whom there was no lack, and one of them, resembling a figure of Pan, seized a maiden by the waist, and both rigadooned merrily over the floor.

Leaving this scene of wreck, confusion, and uproar, I proceeded toward the gate of the gardens leading into the Rue de Rivoli. I was surprised to find here a couple of ruthless-looking blousemen, armed with pistols, keeping guard. On inquiry, I found that the mob themselves had instituted a sort of government. One fellow, in the midst of the devastation in the palace, seeing a man put something into his pocket, wrote on the wall, "Death to the thief!" The Draconian code was immediately adopted by the people, and became the law of Paris. Five persons, taken in acts of robbery, were shot down by the people, and their bodies exposed in the streets, with the label of "Thieves" on their breast. Thus order and law seemed to spring up from the instincts of society, in the midst of uproar and confusion, as crystals are seen shooting from the chaos of the elements.

Three days had now passed, and the revolution was accomplished. The people soon returned to their wonted habits—the provisional government proceeded in its duties—the barricades disappeared, and in a single week the more obtrusive traces of the storm that had passed had vanished from the streets and squares of Paris. A mighty shock has, however, been given to society, which still swells and undulates like the sea after a storm. The adjacent countries seem to feel the movement, and all Europe is in a state of agitation. What must be the final re-

sult, can not now be foreseen ; but I fear that, ere the sky be cleared, still further tempests must sweep over France and the surrounding nations. The day of reckoning for long years of tyranny and corruption has come, and the sun of liberty can hardly be expected to shine full on the scene, till a night of fear, and agitation, and tears has been passed.

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## LETTER LVIII.

*Events which immediately followed the Revolution—Scenes in the streets of Paris—Anxiety of Strangers—Proceedings of the Americans—Address to the Provisional Government—Reply of M. Arago—Procession in the streets—Inauguration of the Republic—Funeral of the Victims—Presentation of Flags—Conspiracy of the 15th of May—Insurrection of June—Adoption of the Constitution—Louis Napoleon President.*

MY DEAR C\*\*\*\*\*

It is quite impossible to give you any adequate idea of the state of things in Paris, immediately after the revolution described in my preceding letter. The Provisional Government, at the Hotel de Ville, consisting of persons who had seized the reins of authority which had suddenly fallen from the hands of the now prostrate monarchy, was as yet without real power. Every thing was in a state of paralysis, or disorganization. There was no effective police, no visible authority, no actual government ; every man did what seemed good in his own eyes. Boys and blackguards paraded the streets with swords at their side, muskets in their hands, and sashes around their

waists. Enormous processions of men, sometimes mingled with women, moved along the thoroughfares, singing the Marseillaise and "*Mourir pour la Patrie*." It was a general jubilee—and, strange to say, without riot, without violence, without fear. I walked freely abroad in the streets, taking my wife and children with me; we were constantly saluted by men and women offering us tricolored rosettes, which they pinned upon our breasts with the utmost good-humor, expecting, of course, a few sous in return. This state of things continued for some weeks—the people being a law unto themselves, and refraining alike from turbulence, from outrage, and from pillage. It is probable that in no other great city of the world could the masses be let loose from the restraints of government and law, and yet keep themselves within the bounds of order and propriety, as did the Parisians during this remarkable era.

Of course, there was a general feeling of anxiety among all reflecting people in Paris, and especially those whose minds reverted to the first French revolution. This disquietude extended particularly to all foreigners, and they naturally cast about for the means of safety. It was difficult to leave Paris, for some of the railroads were broken up, and all the modes of conveyance were deranged. It was almost impossible to get money for the purposes of travel, and even if one could escape from Paris, more dangerous agitation might exist in the country. The lead

ing Americans took counsel together on this subject, and finally concluded to proceed, in procession, to the Provisional Government, and congratulate them upon the revolution.\* A message was sent to inquire if this would be acceptable; the answer was favorable, and, indeed, they were desired to hasten the proceeding, as it was thought such a demonstration might contribute to give support to the trembling authority of the self-elected rulers.

In the preliminary meeting for bringing about the proposed address, I was chosen to preside, and was also selected as chairman of the committee to draw up the address itself. I had some curious counsel given me by my countrymen, while I was preparing this document. The Americans looked upon the revolution, not only as the overthrow of monarchy, but as the birth of that liberty which we are taught to cherish as one of the greatest boons of existence. The example of Paris extended like an electric shock to the adjacent countries. Italy, Austria, Prussia, seemed on the point of emancipating themselves from the yoke which had bound them for ages. With a generous sympathy, our countrymen wished success to these efforts. The formation of a republican government seems to us so easy, so obvious a work, that

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\* Mr. Rush, who was then our ambassador to France, proceeded in his official capacity to the Hotel de Ville, three or four days after the completion of the revolution, and recognized the government, congratulating them upon a change which had resulted in the establishment of a republic.



we suppose every nation which undertakes the task, will of course accomplish it. It was natural, therefore, for an American in Paris to believe that the good time had actually come, and that the people had only to inaugurate and establish it. I had several plans of addresses sent to me founded upon this idea; one a declaration of principles, of seven foolscap pages, drawn up pretty much after the manner of our Declaration of Independence. Conceiving it, however, no time to be magniloquent, I prepared the following brief address, which was adopted:

“Gentlemen, members of the Provisional Government of the French People—As citizens of the United States of America, and spectators of recent events in Paris, we come to offer you our congratulations. A grateful recollection of the past, and the ties of amity which have existed between your country and ours, prompt us to be among the first to testify to you, and to the people of France, the sympathy, the respect, and the admiration which those events inspire. Acknowledging the right of every nation to form its own government, we may still be permitted to felicitate France upon the choice of a system which recognizes as its basis the great principles of rational liberty and political equality.

“In the progress of the recent struggle here, we have admired the magnanimity of the French people, their self-command in the hour of triumph, and their speedy return to order and law, after the tumult and confusion of revolution. We see in these circumstances, happy omens of good to France and to mankind—assurances that what has been so nobly begun will be consummated in the permanent establishment of a just and liberal government, and the consequent enjoyment of liberty, peace, and prosperity, among the citizens of this great country. Accept this testimo-

nial of the sentiments which fill our hearts at the present moment, and be assured that the news of the revolution which you have just achieved, will be hailed by our countrymen on the other side of the Atlantic, with no other emotions than those of hope and joy for France and for the world."

All things being duly prepared, the Americans, about two hundred and fifty in number, marched in procession to the Hotel de Ville, the striped bunting and the tricolor waving together in harmony over our heads. The citizens of Paris looked upon us with welcome, and frequently the cry arose—"Vive la République Américaine!"\*

The Hotel de Ville is one of the most sumptuous palaces in Europe; and here, in the magnificent apartment called the Hall of Reception, we were received by the Provisional Government—all dressed in their uniform of blue, ornamented with gold lace, and rich sashes around the waist. Lamartine was ill, and was not present; Arago presided. I began to read the address, in English, when a tipsy Frenchman, who had squeezed into the hall with the pro-

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\* The committee on the address, besides myself, were Messrs. Corbin, of Virginia, Shinmin, of Boston, and the late Henry Coleman, well known for his agricultural writings, as well as his travels in England and France.

The president on the occasion was Hon. G. W. Erving, formerly minister of the United States to Madrid.

The chief marshal was Wright Hawkes, Esq., of New York, assisted by Robert Wickliffe, Jr., of Kentucky, E. C. Cowden, of Boston, &c.

It is a curious fact, that the Americans in the procession were several inches taller than the average of Frenchmen—a circumstance which attracted general attention in Paris at the time.

cession, came forward and insisted that it should be read in French. He was pacified by being told that it would be read in that language after I had concluded. When the address was finished, M. Arago replied on behalf of the government, in appropriate terms. M. Poussin\* then seized the two flags, and waving them together, pronounced an animated discourse, in which he acknowledged with gratitude the sympathy of the Americans in the recent revolution, and expressed the hope that France had now entered upon the long-hoped-for millennial era of equality, fraternity, and liberty.

It is not my design to give you a detailed history of the revolution, but I may sketch a few of the prominent events which followed. For this purpose, I make an extract from an account I have elsewhere given :

For several weeks and months, Paris was a scene of extraordinary excitement. The Provisional Government had announced that they would provide the people with labor. Consequently, deputations of tailors, hatters, engravers, musicians, paviors, cabinet-makers, seamstresses, and a multitude of other trades

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\* M. Guillaume Tell Poussin came to the United States many years ago, and was employed here as an engineer for a long time. After his return to France, he wrote an able statistical work on this country, in which he highly praised our institutions. When the French Republic was organized, he was sent as minister to Washington. Mr. Clayton, Secretary of State under Gen. Taylor, took exception to certain expressions used by M. Poussin in his correspondence with the department, and accordingly he ceased to represent his country here. M. Poussin is, however, a sincere republican, and a great admirer of the United States ; and though his principles are well known, such is the respect entertained for him, that the suspicion of the French government, even under the empire, has never subjected him to constraint or annoyance.

and vocations, flocked in long lines to the Hotel de Ville, to solicit the favor of the government. Vast crowds of people perpetually haunted this place, and, in one instance, a raging multitude came thundering at the doors, demanding that the blood-red flag of the former revolution should be the banner of the new republic! It was on this occasion that Lamartine addressed the people, and with such eloquence as to allay the storm which threatened again to deluge France in blood. The members of the government were so besieged and pressed by business, that for several weeks they slept in the Hotel de Ville. They proceeded with a bold hand to announce and establish the republic. In order to make a favorable impression upon the people, they decreed a gorgeous ceremony at the foot of the column of July, on Sunday, February 27th, by which they solemnly inaugurated the new republic. All the members of the Provisional Government were present on horseback; there were sixty thousand troops and two hundred thousand people to witness the spectacle.

Another still more imposing celebration took place on the 4th of March. This was called the "Funeral of the Victims." After religious ceremonies at the Madeleine, the members of the government, with a long train of public officers, and an immense cortege of military, proceeded to the July column, conducting a superb funeral-car drawn by eight cream-colored horses. This contained most of the bodies of those slain in the revolution—about two hundred and fifty. These were deposited in the vault of the column, with the victims of the revolution of 1830.

Nothing can adequately portray this spectacle. A tricolored flag was stretched on each side of the Boulevards, from the Madeleine to the July column—a distance of three miles. As this consisted of three strips of cloth, the length of the whole was eighteen miles! The solemn movement of the funeral procession, the dirge-like music, the march of nearly a hundred thousand soldiers, and the sympathizing presence of three hundred thousand souls, rendered it a scene never surpassed and rarely equaled,

either by the magnificence of the panorama, or the solemn and touching sentiments excited.

Still other spectacles succeeded, and in the summer four hundred thousand people assembled in the Champs Elysées to witness the Presentation of Flags to the assembled National Guards—eighty thousand being present. Such scenes can only be witnessed in Paris.

Events proceeded with strange rapidity. A Constituent Assembly was called by the Provisional Government, to form a constitution. The members were elected by ballot, the suffrage being universal—that is, open to all Frenchmen over twenty-one. The election took place in April, and on the 4th of May the first session was held, being officially announced to the assembled people from the steps of the Chamber of Deputies. On the 15th of May a conspiracy was disclosed, the leaders of which were Raspail, Barbès, Sobrier, Caussidière, Blanqui, Flotte, Albert, and Louis Blanc\*—the two last having been members of the Provisional Government. Caussidière was prefect of police.

The Assembly proceeded in the work of framing a constitution, administering the government in the mean time. On the 24th of June, a terrific insurrection broke out, promoted by the leaders of various factions, all desiring the overthrow of the republic which had been inaugurated. Cavaignac, who was minister of war, was appointed dictator, and Paris was declared in a state of siege. The insurgents confined their operations chiefly to the faubourgs St. Jacques and St. Antoine. They got possession of these, and formed skillful and able plans of operation, which had for their ultimate object the surrounding of the city and getting possession of certain important points, including the Chamber—thus securing the government in their own hands.

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\* These men were Socialists, and aimed at a destruction of the government, so that they might bring into effect their peculiar schemes. They were shortly afterward tried at Bourges, and sentenced to long imprisonment or banishment. Louis Blanc and Caussidière escaped to England. The former remains in London; the latter is now a wine-merchant in New York.

Cavaignac proceeded to attack the barricades, thus clearing the streets one by one. The fighting was terrible. For four days the battle continued, the sound of cannon frequently filling the ears of the people all over the city. Night and day the inhabitants were shut up in their houses—ignorant of all, save that the conflict was raging. The women found employment in scraping lint for the wounded. All Paris was a camp. The windows were closed; the soldiers and sentinels passed their watchwords; litters, carrying the dead and wounded, were seen along the streets; the tramp of marching columns and the thunder of rushing cavalry broke upon the ear!

At last the conflict was over; the insurgents were beaten—Cavaignac triumphed. But the victory was dearly purchased. Between two and three thousand persons were killed—and among them, no less than seven general officers had fallen. The insurgents fought like tigers. Many women were in the ranks, using the musket, carrying the banners, rearing barricades, and cheering the fight. Boys and girls mingled in the conflict. The National Guards who combated them, had equal courage and superior discipline. One of the Garde Mobile—Hyacinthe Martin, a youth of fourteen—took four standards from the tops of the barricades. His gallantry excited great interest, and Cavaignac decorated him with the cross of the Legion of Honor. He became a hero of the day, but, sad to relate, being invited to fêtes, banquets, and repasts, his head was turned, and he was soon a ruined profligate.

The leaders in this terrific insurrection were never detected. It is certain that the movement was headed by able men, and directed by skillful engineers. The masses who fought were roused to fury by poverty and distress, by disappointment at finding the national workshops discontinued, and by stimulating excitements furnished by socialist clubs and newspapers. It is computed that forty thousand insurgents were in arms, and eighty thousand government soldiers were brought against them. It may be considered that this struggle was the remote but inevita-



ble result of the course of the Provisional Government in adopting the doctrine of obligation, on the part of the State, to supply work and wages to the people, and in establishing national workshops in pursuance of this idea. Still, it may be said, on the other hand, that nothing but such a step could have enabled the Provisional Government to maintain itself during three months, and give being to an organized Assembly from which a legitimate government could proceed.

The constitution was finished in the autumn, and promulgated on the 19th of November, 1848. On the 10th of December following, the election of President took place, and it appeared that Louis Napoleon had five million out of seven million votes. He was duly inaugurated about a week after the election, and entered upon the high duties which thus devolved upon him.

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## LETTER LIX.

*The Duties of a Consul—Pursuit of a missing Family—Paying for Experience.*

MY DEAR C \*\*\*\*\*

Let us now come to the period of 1851, when I entered upon the consulate. Of the space during which I was permitted to hold this office, I have no very remarkable personal incidents to relate. The certifying of invoices, and the legalizing of deeds and powers of attorney, are the chief technical duties of the American Consul at Paris.\* If he desires to

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\* Paris is not a seaport, and therefore the numerous consular duties connected with shipping are never required here. On the other hand, it is the literary metropolis of France; and as French consuls are required to collect and furnish geographical, historical, commercial, and statistical information, I found myself constantly applied to by editors

enlarge the circle of his operations, however, he can find various ways of doing it, as for instance, in supplying the wants of distressed Poles, Hungarians, Italians, and others, who are martyrs to liberty, and suppose the American heart and purse always open to those who are thus afflicted: in answering questions from notaries, merchants, lawyers, as to the laws of the different American States upon marriage, inheritance,

of papers, authors, bankers, merchants, government officials, for particular facts in regard to the United States. I was exceedingly struck with the general ignorance of all classes, as to our country, its institutions, geography, population, history, &c. I therefore prepared a work, which, with the kind assistance of M. Delbrück, was put into French, and published—it being an octavo volume of about three hundred and seventy-five pages, entitled *Les Etats-Unis d'Amérique*. I had the gratification of seeing it well received on all sides, even by the members of the government, from whom I had complimentary acknowledgments. There is, indeed, a great and growing interest in our country all over Europe, and it seems to be the duty of American officials abroad to take advantage of their opportunities to satisfy and gratify this curiosity by furnishing, in a correct and accessible form, the kind of information that is desired.

The number of Americans in Paris, residents and travelers, varies from one to three thousand. If the Consul is understood to bar out his countrymen, he may see very few of them; if, on the contrary, he is willing to make himself useful in a neighborly way, many of them will call upon him to take his advice as to schools, physicians, routes of travel, and the like. When there is difficulty, the Consul is the natural resource of his countrymen, especially for those who are without acquaintance. In case of the death of an American, if there is no friend or relative present upon whom the duty devolves, the Consul gives directions as to the funeral, and takes charge of the effects of the deceased.

I have already alluded to French physicians and surgeons, and expressed the opinion that ours, in America, are quite as good. There is, no doubt, great science in the medical and surgical professions of Paris; but there are two things to be suggested to those who go there for advice. In the first place, these practitioners are very daring in their treatment of strangers, and in the next, their charges to foreigners are usually about double the ordinary rates.

While I was in Paris, a very wealthy and rather aged gentleman from Virginia consulted an eminent surgeon there, as to hydrocele. An op-

and the like ; in advising emigrants whether to settle in Iowa, or Illinois, or Missouri, or Texas ; in listening to inquiries made by deserted wives as to where their errant husbands may be found, who left France ten or twenty or thirty years ago, and went to America, by which is generally understood St. Domingo or Martinique. A considerable business may be done in lending money to foreigners, who pretend to have been naturalized in the United States, and are therefore entitled to consideration and sympathy, it being of course well understood that money lent to such persons will never be repaid. Some time and cash may also be invested in listening to the stories and contributing to the wants of promising young American artists, who are striving to get to Italy, to pursue their studies—such persons usually being graduates of the London school of artful dodgers. Some waste leisure and a good deal of postage may be disposed of in correspondence with ingenious Americans—inventors and discoverers—as for instance, with a man in Arkansas or Minnesota, who informs you that he has

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eration was recommended and performed, entirely against the advice of a Virginia physician who chanced to be in Paris, and was consulted. In thirty days the gentleman died. He had intrusted his affairs to me, and I paid his bills. The charge of the surgeon was five thousand francs ! The bills of the nurses, hotels, attendants, &c., were of a similar character. A young physician, who had been employed fourteen days as nurse, estimated his services at fifteen hundred francs ! I make these remarks, that my countrymen going to Paris for medical or surgical advice, may be duly warned against placing themselves in the hands of rash and unprincipled practitioners. A great name in Paris is by no means a guarantee of that care, prudence, and conscientiousness, which belong to the physician at home.

contrived a new and infallible method of heating and ventilating European cities, and wishes it brought to the notice of the authorities there, it being deemed the duty of the American Consul to give attention to such matters. These monotonies are occasionally diversified by a letter from some unfortunate fellow-countryman who is detained at Mazas or Clichy, and begs to be extricated; or some couple who wish to be put under the bonds of wedlock, or some enterprising wife, all the way from Tennessee, in chase of a runaway husband, or some inexperienced but indignant youth who has been fleeced by his landlord.

Mixed up with these amusements, there sometimes comes an order from the government at home, to obtain a certain document, or to give information as to some institution, or perhaps to make some investigation. The following copy of a letter to the State Department at Washington describes an instance of the latter :

PARIS, February 10, 1853.

TO HON. EDWARD EVERETT, Secretary of State.

*Sir*—Your letter of the 30th December, inclosing one from Hon. Jeremiah Clemens, asking information as to the family of André Hentz, was duly received.

Soon after its receipt, I proceeded to No. 9, Rue St. Appoline, Paris, the last known residence of Madame Hentz, but I could obtain no traces of her or her family. I then wrote to the Mayor of Conflans St. Honorine, where she once lived, and received a reply which directed me to make inquiry at the neighboring village of Grenelle. Thither I proceeded, and applied as advised, to No. 5 Rue Fondry. Here I failed, but was led to suppose

that I might get a clew at No. 115 Rue Vieille du Temple, Paris. I returned thither, and on application at the place indicated, was told that no person by the name of Hentz had ever lived there. On going out, I observed that the numbering over the door was freshly painted, and soon discovered that the whole numbering of the street had recently been changed. I now sought the old No. 115, and was here informed that I might perhaps find the person I was looking after at No. 6 Rue Thorigny. I proceeded thither, but was informed that M. Hentz was not there, but perhaps might be found at No. 4. Finally, at No. 4, on the fifth story, I found Henry Hentz and his mother, in rather humble but very neat apartments, and apparently in comfortable circumstances. I told them the object of my visit, and they promised immediately to write to Mr. André Hentz, of whom they had lost all trace, and of whom they were rejoiced to receive intelligence.

I write these particulars, supposing they may be interesting to Mr. Clemens's client.

I am, with great respect, yours, &c.,

S. G. GOODRICH.

Another incident may amuse you. I one day received a number of a Journal published in Paris, entitled "*Archives des Hommes du Jour*," that is, *Memoirs of Men of the Time*, accompanied by a polite note saying that the editors would be happy to insert in their pages a biographical memoir of myself. They had taken the liberty to sketch the beginning of the desired article, but the particular facts of my life they politely begged me to supply.

Supposing this to be one of those applications which are by no means uncommon, I handed to my friend, M. Jules Delbrück, the letter, with two or

three American books, which contained notices of myself, and asked him to write the memoir as desired. This he did, and it was duly sent to the editors of the *Hommes du Jour*. In due time a proof was sent, and at the same time one of the editors, a very smiling gentleman, came and desired to know how many copies of this memoir of myself I should desire! I replied, very innocently, that I should like one or two. The gentleman lifted his eyebrows, and said suggestively—

“Five hundred is the usual number!”

I now for the first time began to suspect a trap, and replied—

“You expect me to take five hundred copies?”

“Every gentleman takes at least that; sometimes a thousand.”

“And you expect me to pay for them?”

“Oui, monsieur!”

“Well, how much do you expect for five hundred copies?”

“A franc each is the usual price; but we will say three hundred and fifty francs for the whole.”

“I understand you now: I furnished the article in question at your request; it was for your benefit, not mine. It is of no advantage to me. If you expected to be paid for it, you should have told me so; you would then have been saved the trouble of pursuing the matter any further.”

The stranger remonstrated, but I firmly refused to



give him an order for any copies of the publication in question.

## LETTER LX.

*Character of the French Republic—Its Contrast with the American Republic—Aspect of the Government in France—Louis Napoleon's ambitious Designs—He Flatters the Army—Spreads Rumors of Socialist Plots—Divisions in the National Assembly—A Levee at the Elysée—The Coup d'Etat—Character of this Act—Napoleon's Government—Feelings of the People.*

MY DEAR C\*\*\*\*\*

From the memoranda furnished in my preceding letter, you will comprehend the duties which devolve upon the American Consul at Paris, and will have glimpses of some of the particular incidents which befell me while I was there in that capacity. I must now give you a rapid sketch of certain public events which transpired at that period, and which will ever be regarded as among the most remarkable in modern history.

I have told you how Louis Napoleon, in consequence of the Revolution of 1848, became President of the Republic. When I arrived in Paris, in April, 1851, he was officiating in that capacity, his residence being the little palace of the Elysée Bourbon, situated between the Faubourg St. Honoré and the Champs Elysées. The National Assembly, consisting of seven hundred and fifty members, held their sessions at the building called the Chamber of Deputies.\* The

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\* The National Assembly held its sessions in a temporary building erected in the courtyard of the Chamber of Deputies, proper. This

government had been in operation somewhat over two years.

At this period France was a republic, but you will not understand that its government bore any great resemblance to our own, save in name. The Constitution had indeed been framed by a Convention, called a Constituent Assembly, chosen for that purpose by the people : this had been submitted to them and ratified by them ; and furthermore, the members of the executive and legislative departments had all been elected by general suffrage. The government, therefore, rested upon the principle of popular sovereignty, but still, it was without those checks and balances belonging to our system, and to which we attribute its success. Ours is a Federal Republic, a union of States, each a distinct, independent, and sovereign power, save only as to national matters, which are given over to the charge of a General Government. This cantonal arrangement, which is the great bulwark of our liberty, was wholly wanting in the French Constitution. All the powers of government—legislative and executive—for the entire kingdom, were centralized at Paris. There were no safeguards interposed between this supreme, unchecked authority, and the people, and the result showed that this defect was fatal. Our general gov-

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was popularly called Pasteboard Hall. Louis Napoleon ordered it to be demolished soon after the promulgation of his Constitution, some weeks subsequent to the Coup d'Etat.

ernment may attempt usurpation, but it will immediately be arrested by the State governments; our general government may go to pieces, but the fabric of State government remains to shelter the people from anarchy. Our legislative department is furthermore divided into two bodies—the House and the Senate, and these operate as checks upon each other. Unhappily, the French system had neither of these provisions, and as the republic had swallowed up despotism, so despotism in turn speedily devoured the republic.

To the casual observer, the external aspect of things was not very different from what it had been under the monarchy of Louis Philippe. It is true that the palace of the Tuileries was vacant; no royal coaches were seen dashing through the avenues; no image and superscription of majesty frowned upon you from the public monuments, which, on the contrary, everywhere proclaimed “liberty, equality, fraternity.” But still, the streets were filled with soldiers as before. Armed sentinels were stationed at the entrances of all the public buildings. The barracks were as usual swarming with soldiers, and large masses of horse and foot were frequently trained at the Champ de Mars and at Satory. Martial reviews and exercises were, indeed, the chief amusement of the metropolis. The President’s house was a palace, and all around it was bristling with bayonets. It was obvious that whatever name the government might bear, military force

lay at the bottom of it, and if to-day this might be its defense, to-morrow it might also be its overthrow.

It is now ascertained that Louis Napoleon, from the beginning, had his mind fixed upon the restoration of the empire. In accepting the presidency of the republic, and even in swearing fidelity to the Constitution, he considered himself only as mounting the steps of the imperial throne. The French have so long been accustomed to military despotism, that they have no idea of government without it. The people there have not the habit, so universal with us, of obeying the law, through a sense of right; they must always have before them the cannon and the bayonet, to enforce obedience. The framers of the new Constitution, either having no conception of a government unsupported by an army, or having no faith that the French nation would observe laws resting only upon moral obligation, gave to the chief magistrate the actual command of a large body of troops. With a view to prepare them to serve him, in time of need, the President flattered the officers and cajoled the men in various ways, even ordering them in one instance to be served with champagne!

In order to prepare the nation for the revolution which he meditated, Louis Napoleon caused agitating and alarming rumors to be circulated, of a terrible plot, planned by the democrats, republicans, and socialists of France, the object of which was to overturn the whole fabric of society, to destroy religion, to sweep

away the obligations of marriage, to strip the rich of their property, and make a general distribution of it among the masses. Other conspiracies, having similar designs, were said to exist in all the surrounding countries of Europe, and the time was now near at hand when the fearful explosion would take place. The police of France, subject to the control and direction of the President, were instructed to discover evidences of this infernal plot, and they were so successful, that the public mind was filled with a vague but anxious apprehension that society was reposing upon a volcano, which might soon burst forth and overwhelm the whole country in chaos.

The National Assembly conducted in a manner to favor these deep, sinister schemes of the President. They were divided into four or five factions, and spent their time chiefly in angry disputes and selfish intrigues. A portion of them were monarchists, and though they had acquired their seats by pledges of devotion to the republic, they were now plotting its overthrow, a part being for the restoration of the Orleanists and a part for the Bourbons. Another faction was for Louis Napoleon, and actively promoted his schemes. By the Constitution he was ineligible for a second term, and his friends were seeking the means of overcoming this difficulty, and giving him a re-election, by fair means or foul. The liberals were divided into several shades of opinion, some being republicans, after the model of General Ca-



vaignac; some being democrats, like Victor Hugo; and some socialists, after the fashion of Pierre Leroux. In such a state of things, there was a vast deal of idle debate, while the substantial interests of the country seemed, if not totally forgotten, at least secondary to the interests of parties, and the passions and prejudices of individuals.

Thus, although France was a republic, it was obvious that the government had fallen into selfish hands, and must perish. Louis Napoleon was only waiting a favorable moment to enter upon his schemes for its destruction. His plans rapidly advanced to maturity. The terror he had excited of a grand socialist convulsion, naturally prepared the people of property to look with favor upon any strong arm that might save them from such a catastrophe; the people at large, even the masses, the friends of the republic, were disgusted at the useless discussions, frothy declamations, and factious intrigues of the Assembly. Louis Napoleon watched his opportunity, and at last, every thing seeming to favor his scheme, he entered upon it with a degree of boldness which has few parallels in history.

I remember that on a certain Monday evening, the 1st of December, 1852, I was present at the Elysée, and was then first introduced to Louis Napoleon. I found him to be an ordinary-looking person, rather under size, but well formed, having a large nose, rather large fishy eyes, and a dull expression. The

room was tolerably full, the company consisting, as is usual in such cases, of diplomats, military officers, and court officials, with a sprinkling of citizens in black coats—for hitherto the requisition of a court uniform had not been imposed. This, you will remember, was under the Republic; the rule which raised the black coat to a question of state, grew out of the Empire. Nevertheless, I was forcibly struck by the preponderance of soldiers in the assembly, and I said several times to my companions, that it seemed more like a camp than a palace. The whole scene was dull; the President himself appeared preoccupied, and was not master of his usual urbanity; Gen. Magnan walked from room to room with a ruminating air, occasionally sending his keen glances around, as if searching for something which he could not find. There was no music, no dancing. That gayety which almost always pervades a festive party in Paris, was wholly wanting. There was no ringing laughter, no merry hum of conversation. I noticed all this, but I did not suspect the cause. At eleven o'clock the assembly broke up, and the guests departed. At twelve, the conspirators, gathered for their several tasks, commenced their operations.

About four in the morning, the leading members of the Assembly were seized in their beds, and hurried to prison. Troops were distributed at various points, so as to secure the city. When the light of day came, proclamations were posted at the corners of the

streets announcing to the citizens that the National Assembly was dissolved, that universal suffrage was decreed, that the Republic was established! Such was the general unpopularity of the Assembly, that the first impression of the people was that of delight at its overthrow. Throughout the first day, the streets of Paris were like a swarming hive, filled with masses of people, yet for the most part in good-humor. The second day they had reflected, and began to frown, but yet there was no general spirit of revolt. A few barricades were attempted, but the operators were easily dispersed. The third day came, and although there was some agitation among the masses, there was evidently no preparation, no combination for general resistance. As late as ten o'clock in the forenoon, I met one of the republicans whom I knew, and asked him what was to be done. His reply was:

"We can do nothing: our leaders are in prison; we are bound hand and foot. I am ready to give my life at the barricades, if with the chance of benefit; but I do not like to throw it away. We can do nothing!"

Soon after this, I perceived heavy columns of troops, some four thousand men, marching through the Rue de la Paix, and then proceeding along the Boulevards toward the Porte St. Denis. These were soon followed by a body of about a thousand horse. I was told that similar bodies were moving to the

same point through other avenues of the city. In a short time the whole Boulevard, from the Rue de la Paix to the Place de la Bastille, an extent of two miles, was filled with troops. My office was on the Boulevard des Italiens, and was now fronted by a dense body of lancers, each man with his cocked pistol in his hand. Except the murmur of the horses' hoofs, there was a general stillness over the city. The sidewalks were filled with people, and though there was no visible cause for alarm, there was still a vague apprehension which cast pallor and gloom upon the faces of all.

Suddenly a few shots were heard in the direction of the Boulevard Montmartre, and then a confused hum, and soon a furious clatter of hoofs. A moment after, the whole body of horse started into a gallop, and rushed by as if in flight; presently they halted, however, wheeled slowly, and gradually moved back, taking up their former position. The men looked keenly at the houses on either side, and pointed their pistols threateningly at all whom they saw at the windows. It afterward appeared, that when the troops had been drawn out in line and stationed along the Boulevard, some half dozen shots were fired into them from the tops of buildings and from windows; this created a sudden panic; the troops ran, and crowding upon others, caused the sudden movement I have described. In a few moments, the heavy, sickening sound of muskets came from

the Porte St. Denis. Volley succeeded volley, and after some time the people were seen rushing madly along the pavements of the Boulevard as if to escape. The gate of our hotel was now closed, and at the earnest request of the throng that had gathered for shelter in the court of the hotel, I put out the "Stars and Stripes"—the first and last time that I ever deemed it necessary. The dull roar of muskets, with the occasional boom of cannon, continued at intervals for nearly half an hour. Silence at last succeeded, and the people ventured into the streets.

About four in the afternoon, I walked for a mile along the Boulevard. The pavements were strewn with the fragments of shattered windows, broken cornices, and shivered doorways. Many of the buildings, especially those on the southern side of the street, were thickly spattered with bullet-marks, especially around the windows. One edifice was riddled through and through with cannon-shot. Frequent spots of blood stained the sidewalk, and along the Boulevard Montmartre, particularly around the doorways, there were pools like those of the shambles; it being evident that the reckless soldiers\* had shot down in heaps the fugitives who, taken by surprise,

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\* The soldiers fired upon all they saw in the streets. An old woman going along with a loaf of bread, had a bullet put through her; an apothecary, who ventured to appear at his door, instantly received a ball in his forehead. Files of soldiers poured their volleys upon the innocent people passing along the Boulevard; shots were fired at the windows of private houses; seven persons were killed in a bookseller's shop. One of my friends saw seventeen dead bodies in one gutter.

strove to obtain shelter at the entrances of the hotels upon the street. It was a sight to sicken the heart, especially of an American, who is not trained to these scenes of massacre. Toward evening a portion of the troops moved away; the rest remained, and bivouacked in the streets for the night. At ten o'clock, I again visited the scene, and was greatly struck with the long line of watch-fires, whose fitful lights, reflected by dark groups of armed men, only rendered the spectacle more ghastly and gloomy.

Of the whole number killed in Paris during this, the third day of the Coup d'Etat, we have no certain account: it is generally estimated at from one thousand to fifteen hundred. I have told you that the press was silenced, save two or three papers, which told the whole story so as to justify the conduct of Louis Napoleon. These represented that the National Assembly were plotting for his overthrow by violent means, and thus would make it appear that his conduct was not only justifiable as an act of self-preservation, but necessary in view of the public good. It is important to state, however, that although the agents of the usurper seized upon the papers of the suspected members at their own houses, and at a moment of surprise, no sufficient proofs have yet been adduced of the alleged treason of the Assem-

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These persons thus slaughtered were not rioters, working at barricades; they were mostly gentlemen, and hence it was called the massacre of the "kid gloves." The soldiers had undoubtedly been stimulated by liquor to qualify them to perform this work of butchery.



bly. The apologists of the Coup d'Etat have further declared that the massacre along the Boulevards which I have described, was a measure of stern necessity, in order to repress the insurgent socialists. The fact seems rather to be that it was a cool and calculated slaughter of innocent persons, in order to show the power and spirit of the Dictator, and to strike with paralyzing fear those who should venture to oppose him.

The morning came, and the triumph of the reign of terror was complete. What was enacted in Paris, was imitated all over France. Nearly every department was declared in a state of siege; revolt was punished with death, and doubt or hesitation with imprisonment. Forty thousand persons were hurried to the dungeons, without even the form or pretense of trial. All over the country the press was silenced, as it had been in Paris, save only a few obsequious prints, which published what was dictated to them. These declared that all this bloodshed and violence were the necessary result of the socialist conspiracy, which threatened to overturn society; happily, as they contended, Louis Napoleon, like a beneficent providence, had crushed the monster, and he now asked the people to ratify what he had done, by making him President for ten years. In the midst of agitation, delusion, and panic, the vote was taken, and the usurpation was legalized by a vote of eight millions of suffrages! The nominal Republic, but real Dic-

tatorship, thus established, was soon made to give way to the Empire; the ambitious plotter reached the imperial throne, and now stands before the world as Napoleon III.!

It is impossible for us Americans to look upon the conduct of the chief actor in this startling drama, but with reprobation. We regard constitutions, ratified by the people, as sacred; we consider oaths to support them as pledges of character, faith, honor, truth—all that belongs to manhood. We look upon blood shed for mere ambition, as murder. The American people must be totally changed in religion, morals, feelings, and political associations, before they could cast their votes for a ruler whose lips were stained with perjury, and whose hands were red with the slaughter of their fellow-citizens. But the French nation is of a different moral constitution; their tastes, experience, souvenirs, are all different. They are accustomed to perfidy on the part of their rulers; violence and crime, wrought for ambition, have stained the paths of every dynasty that has ruled over them for a space of fourteen centuries. France is trained to these things, and hence the public taste, the prevailing sentiments of society, are not greatly shocked at them. The people there do not reckon with a successful usurper as they would with an ordinary man acting in the common business of life; when they see him installed in the Tuileries they forget his treacheries and his massacres—the means

by which he attained his power—and cry “Vive l’Empereur!” Even the Church now looks upon Louis Napoleon’s conduct with approbation, and burns incense and sings *Te Deums* in his behalf, as the savior of religion, family, society.

And it must be admitted that, since his acquisition of a throne, Louis Napoleon has conducted the government with ability, and he has certainly been seconded by fortune. He married a lady who, after becoming an empress, shed luster upon her high position by her gentle virtues and gracious manners. He engaged in the Eastern War, and has triumphed. He has greatly improved and embellished the capital, and made Paris the most charming city in the world; nowhere else does life seem to flow on so cheerfully and so tranquilly as here. He has gradually softened the rigors of his government—and though some noble spirits still pine in exile,\* he has taken frequent ad-

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\* The number of individuals exiled by the Coup d’Etat amounted to several thousands—some of the more obnoxious persons being sent to Cayenne, Noukahiva, and Lambessa in Algeria. Others were only banished from France; a portion of these have since had permission to return. Among those still excluded is Victor Hugo, no doubt the most eloquent writer and orator now living. He has continued to make the island of Jersey his residence. Two other exiles of some note are Ledru Rollin and Louis Blanc, members of the Provisional Government, and whose misconduct contributed largely to the overthrow of the republic. These have remained in England. Lamoricière, Changarnier, Charras, and Bedeau, all distinguished officers, are in Belgium or Germany.

Cavaignac, who was imprisoned with other members of the Assembly, was speedily released. He is believed to be a sound republican, somewhat according to our American ideas. He is permitted to reside in France, but takes no part in public affairs. Lamartine, a fine poet,

vantage of opportunity to diminish the number. The people of France, at the present time, appear to be satisfied with the government, and probably a very large majority, could the question be proposed to them, would vote for its continuance.

Beneath this smooth and tranquil surface there may be, and no doubt is, a smouldering fire of discontent, and which will seek the first opportunity to explode. Louis Napoleon rules only by the vigorous and watchful power of despotism, and it is not in the nature of the French people to endure this for a long period of time. The existing empire can hardly be perpetuated beyond the life of him who has created it; indeed, its present strength lies much more in the fear of anarchy, which is certain to follow if that be removed, than from any love for the system itself, or of him who has imposed it upon the country.

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a captivating orator, an elegant writer, and withal a man whose heart is full of every noble sentiment, escaped the indignity of imprisonment, and he too is allowed to live in his native land. But his lips are sealed as to every political question, and his only communication with his countrymen and with mankind is through literature, carefully divested of every thought and feeling pertaining to current politics. Every author in France, indeed, wears a muzzle which only permits him to breathe such thoughts as cannot offend the powers that be.

## LETTER LXI.

*Meeting in Paris to commemorate the Death of Clay and Webster—Termination of my Consular Duties—Character of the French Nation—The Black-coat Circular.*

MY DEAR C\*\*\*\*\*

As this chapter must bring me to the end of my residence in Paris, you will permit me to crowd into it a variety of topics, without regard to chronological order or continuity of narrative.

In the autumn of 1852, the news came that Daniel Webster was no more. Under any circumstances, the decease of such a person would cause a deep and pervading emotion, but the manner of Mr. Webster's death imparted to it a peculiar degree of interest. The closing scene was, in fact, appropriate to his character, his noble person, his gigantic intellect, his great fame. It was remarked by an eminent statesman in England, that Mr. Webster's was the most sublime death of modern times. The European papers were filled with details of the event. The Americans in Paris, on hearing the tidings, deemed it proper to assemble for the purpose of giving expression to their emotions. As Mr. Clay had died only a few months before, it was resolved at the same time to pay due homage to his memory.

The meeting, consisting of several hundred persons, mostly Americans, was held in the splendid salon of

the Cercle des Deux Mondes, Boulevard Montmartre. Mr. Rives, our minister, made an eloquent and touching address, delineating the remarkable qualities of these two men, and comparing Mr. Clay to the Mississippi, which spreads its fertilizing waters over the boundless regions of the West, and Mr. Webster to the resistless Niagara, emptying seas at a plunge, and shaking all around with its echoing thunders. Mr. Barnard, our minister to the Court of Berlin, paid a full and hearty tribute to the memory of Mr. Webster; he was followed by Mr. George Wood, of New York, and Franklin Dexter, of Boston, who also made eloquent and feeling addresses. M. Bois Lecompte, former minister of France to the United States, and well acquainted with the two great men whose death we had met to commemorate, closed with a beautiful eulogy upon each.

In the summer of 1853, I was politely advised from the State Department that President Pierce had appointed my successor in the consulate. Thus, having held the place a little over two years, on the 1st of August, 1853,\* I was restored to the privileges of

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\* I shall, I trust, be excused for inserting in a note the following, which I take from Galignani's Paris Messenger of December 15th, 1854:

MR. GOODRICH, THE LATE CONSUL OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AT PARIS.—The Americans in Paris lately presented to Mr. Goodrich a medallion executed in *vermeil*, by the distinguished artist, Adam-Salomon, with the following inscription encircling an admirable portrait of the consul, in relief—

"To S. G. Goodrich, Consul of the United States of America at Paris, presented by his countrymen in that City, August 1st, 1853."



private citizen life. As I had various engagements which forbade me immediately to leave France, I hired a small house in Courbevoie, which I made my residence till my departure for America in the summer of 1855.

This naturally brings me to the close of my story,

The following correspondence, which took place between the parties, is creditable to all concerned :

“PARIS, September 5th, 1854.

“To S. G. GOODRICH, Esq.—

“It is my very agreeable duty to present you, herewith, a medalion, executed at the request of a number of your American friends at Paris. It is destined alike as a token of personal respect, and an expression of the universal gratification among your countrymen at the manner in which you discharged your duties while consul of the United States here. Not content with a merely formal fulfillment of your official obligations, you made your position eminently agreeable and useful to your countrymen, and at the same time rendered it subservient to the best interests of our common country. On these points there is but one opinion; and, therefore, in making this offering, in behalf of your numerous friends, I am instructed to add their congratulations that nothing can deprive you of the good-will and good opinion so legitimately obtained.

I am, sir, respectfully yours,

“FRANCIS WARDEN.”

“PARIS, September 16th, 1854.

“*My Dear Sir:*—I have this day had the pleasure of receiving your letter, with the accompanying testimonial of personal regard and approbation of my official conduct, presented by you in behalf of my American friends in Paris. I need not say that I receive these unexpected tokens of kindness with great satisfaction, rendered doubly gratifying by the fact that they come when all know that I have only the humble thanks of a private citizen to give in return. While I thus acknowledge and cherish the compliment my friends have paid me, I feel bound to say that I had been already compensated for any personal sacrifices I had made to obligations lying beyond the mere routine of official duty, while I held the consulate in Paris. During that period, a space of little over two years, more than five hundred letters of introduction were presented to me, and I received at my house several thousands of my countrymen, strangers in this city; yet the instances were extremely rare in which an American trespassed either upon my time or my feelings. On the con-

so far as it relates to France. Were it pertinent to my design, I should give you some sketches of the French people—of their character and manners, which, in their minuter shadings, are not well appreciated in the United States. We readily comprehend England and the English people, because their language, their institutions, their genius, are similar to our own; but in France we find a different language, a different religion, different institutions—in short, a different civilization. In England, Sunday is a holy day, in France a holiday, and this fact is a sort of index to the difference between these two countries in regard to opinion, society, life. In England, the future exercises a powerful influence over the mind; in France, it is thought best to enjoy the present; England would improve the world, France would embellish it; England founds colonies, plants nations, establishes the useful arts; France refines manners, diffuses the fine arts, and spreads taste and elegance over Christendom. In England the people live in separate buildings, apart from one another, each man claiming that his house is his castle; in France,

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trary, I was day by day more than rewarded for any services rendered, by the agreeable intercourse of persons so universally intelligent, so little requiring, and so instinctively perceiving and observing the proprieties of every situation in which they were placed. I take great pleasure in recording a fact so creditable to our countrymen, even though it may deprive me of all claims to the merits which the kindness of my friends assigns to my conduct. I have the honor to be,

“With great respect, yours, &c.,

“FRANCIS WARDEN, Esq.

“S. G. GOODRICH.”

they live congregated in hotels, one family above another, like the different layers of honeycomb in a hive. The Englishman finds his chief happiness at his fireside, the Frenchman in the sympathy of congregated masses. In England, the best points of the people are seen in the domestic circle; in France, in the salon. In all these things, English ideas are german to our own, and hence we readily understand them, enter into them, appreciate them. As to France, it is otherwise; words there have a different sense, things a different use from that we are accustomed to, and hence, in order to understand the genius of the French nation and to do full justice to it, it is necessary to consider them from their point of view. After all that has been said and done, a work describing French society, manners, and institutions, is still a desideratum. This can not be supplied by the hasty sketches of racing travelers; it must be the work of a laborious and careful student, who unites experience and observation to a large and liberal philosophy, which on the one hand can resist the artifices of taste and the blandishments of luxury, and on the other, appreciate good things, even though they may not bear the patent-mark of his own prepossessions. Of course, you will not expect me to begin such a work in the closing pages of these fugitive letters.\*

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\* I had intended to say a few words in respect to the leading literary persons of France, at the present day, but in entering upon the

I duly received your letter asking my opinion upon the "black-coat question." Mr. Marcy's celebrated circular respecting diplomatic and consular costume was not issued, or at least did not reach me, till after I had ceased to exercise the consular functions; nevertheless, as I had some opportunity to form a

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subject I find it too extensive. I may, however, name in a single paragraph, Alexandre Dumas, whose versatility, fecundity, and capacity for labor are without parallel, and whose genius has placed him at the head of living novelists and dramatists, in spite of his notorious charlatanism and love of publicity; Adolphe Dumas, his son, whose three plays illustrative of the manners of equivocal society and of the life of abandoned women has made him rich at the age of thirty-one—a fact very suggestive as to the state of Parisian society; Lamartine, whose humble apartments in the Rue de la Ville l'Évêque are constantly filled with the admiring friends of the impoverished poet and the disowned politician; Alphonse Karr, whose caustic satires upon vice, folly, and prevalent abuses, published once a week, have made him a valuable reformer; Ampère, the traveler and linguist, whose work upon the United States is perhaps the most just that has yet been written by a foreigner; Emile de Girardin, whose innovation in editorial writing—consisting of the constant recurrence of the *alinéa*, or paragraph, each one of which contains a distinct proposition, deduced from the previous one and leading directly to that which follows—was one of the features of the Presse which produced its immense popularity; Scribe, the indefatigable playwright and librettist; Méry, the poet-laureate or court poetaster; Ponsard, whose two comedies in verse, "L'Honneur et l'Argent" and "La Bourse," are rapidly carrying him to a chair in the Academy; Béranger, hale and active at the age of seventy-six, and the most popular man in France; Gustave Planche, the critic and the terror of authors; Jules Janin, the dramatic critic, whose long labors have been totally unproductive of good to either actor or dramatist; Madame de Girardin—recently deceased—whose one act drama of "La Joie fait Peur" is the most profound piece of psychological dissection in existence; and Madame Dudevant, alias George Sand, whose power of painting the finer and more hidden emotions of the soul is unrivaled.

I must add a word in respect to Madame Ristori, the Italian tragedienne who has recently caused such a thrill of excitement in Paris. She is in nothing more remarkable than in her contrast to Rachel. The latter is the pupil of art, the former of nature. Rachel always plays the same part in the same manner. Every tone, every gesture is studied profoundly,

judgment of the measure, I freely give you my impressions upon the subject.

You understand that the State Department, at different periods, has made certain regulations in respect to the diplomatic and consular service, so far even as to prescribe their official dress. The main body of these rules, as they had existed for many years, was drawn up, I believe, by Mr. Livingston, while Secretary of State under Gen. Jackson. The diplomatic dress consisted of a blue coat and blue pantaloons decorated with gold embroidery, and a white waistcoat. It had a general resemblance to the diplomatic costume of other countries, though it was of the simplest form. The consular dress was similar, though the naval button of the United States was prescribed, and the whole costume had a sort of naval air. Diplomats and consuls wore small swords, but no epaulets.

Nevertheless, Mr. Marcy, soon after his accession to the State Department, under President Pierce, issued a circular requiring consuls to give up these costumes altogether; as to diplomats, it was recommended, though not enjoined, that they should appear before

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and always comes in at the same time and place. Ristori enters into the play with her whole soul, and acts as her feelings dictate. She is of somewhat light complexion, with hazel eyes and brown hair; she has correct features, and off the stage is of grave, lady-like manners and appearance. On the stage she seems to work miracles. I have seen her in Marie Stuart, while on her knees at confession, by a slight continued movement upward make the audience feel as if she were actually ascending to heaven, personally and before their eyes!

foreign courts in simple black. This was urged on the ground that plainness of attire was proper to the representatives of a republic, and it was to be regretted that we had ever departed from the simplicity adopted by Dr. Franklin in appearing before the court of Louis XVI.

It would seem that these are very narrow grounds for a departure from the usages of the civilized world, our own government among the number, and in which Jefferson and Monroe, Adams and Jay, Ellsworth and King, had participated. All these, aye and Dr. Franklin\* too, notwithstanding the current notion that he forced his Quaker clothes upon the court of Louis XVI., wore their court costume, simply because custom required it. There is no doubt that they were more respected, and served their country with more effect than they would have done, had they insisted upon shocking the public

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\* It is said, and I believe truly, that Dr. Franklin's appearance at the court of Louis XVI. in a plain suit of drab cloth, and which for a brief space intoxicated the giddy beau monde of Paris, was accidental: his court suit not arriving in time, and the king, who waited anxiously to receive him, requesting that he would come as he was. Whether this was so or not, I believe there is no doubt that Dr. Franklin afterward adopted a court suit, consisting of a black velvet embroidered coat, and black small-clothes, with a small sword. Dr. Franklin was a man of too much sense to undertake to shock established tastes by an offensive departure from what was esteemed propriety. All the portraits of him taken while he was our ambassador at the French court, show that he was accustomed to dress handsomely. I have a copy of one by Greuze, which represents him in a green silk dressing-gown, edged with fur, a light-colored satin waistcoat, with a frill at the bosom. Such a dress, for an elderly gentleman in his study, would now-a-days be considered almost foppish.



taste by what would have been deemed an indecorum if not an indecency—that is, appearing in common clothes on occasions in which etiquette demanded a special and appropriate attire.

As to the assumption that simplicity of attire is characteristic of republicans, I think there is less of reason in it than of cant. It happens that the particular form of our government excludes all distinctions of rank, and hence the badges which designate these, would be without meaning among us. But with this single exception, we in the United States are as much given to display in dress and equipage as any other people on the globe. We have our military and naval costumes, and these are among the richest in the world: foppery is one of the notorious qualities of all our militia companies. Both our men and women think more of display in dress than those of other nations. When our people get to Europe, they distinguish themselves by going to the height of fashion in all things. At the court introductions in Paris, I always remarked that the Americans—men as well as women—were more sumptuously, and it may be added, more tastefully, attired than most others. Even at the new imperial court of Paris, the American ladies not only stood first in point of beauty, but also in the display of mantles, trains, and diamonds. New Orleans, Virginia, Pennsylvania, New York, Boston, had each its representative, and splendid specimens they were. If the American

Minister had come to introduce these, his countrywomen, to their imperial majesties, and had claimed the privilege of wearing a black coat because simplicity belongs to republicans, I imagine that every observer would have marked the contrast between the pretense and the performance.

Thus, though we may be republicans, we are in fact a sumptuous people, addicted to display, and exceedingly fond of being in the midst of stars and garters. We think the more of these things, doubtless, for the very reason that they are strange to our manners. Every American who goes to London or Paris, wishes to be introduced at court, and seems to feel that this is his privilege. It is not so with any other nation; no English man or woman, in Paris, asks to be presented at the Tuileries, unless it be a person of high social or official rank.

These being characteristics of our people, and perfectly well understood abroad, Mr. Marcy's black-coat circular created no little surprise. It was generally regarded as a mere appeal to the lower classes in America, who might be supposed to entertain the sentiments of the sans-culottes, and as such, it was treated with little respect. Nevertheless, had the government *prescribed* a black dress, for its diplomats, no court in Europe would have made the slightest objection. Such a measure would no doubt have subjected us to criticism, perhaps to ridicule, as a matter of taste; it would have been offensive, inasmuch as it

would have seemed designed as a rebuke of the manners and customs of older and more refined nations than ourselves. We should have been considered as reading a lecture to European courts, in this wise—"Look at us, republicans, and behold how we despise the trappings of royalty, and the gaud of courts; look at our black coats, and go ye and do likewise!" Nevertheless, it is perfectly well understood in Europe that any government may regulate the costume of its representatives, and had Mr. Marcy's circular made it obligatory upon the American diplomatic corps to wear black, or white, or red, or any other color, not the slightest exception would have been taken to it by any court in the world.

This, however, was not the course adopted by the government; they merely recommended, they did not prescribe, the black coat. The situation of all our ministers, *chargés*, and secretaries, therefore, at once became extremely awkward.\* The diplomatic business

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\* The desire of our ministers to satisfy the government at home, as well as to take advantage of the popular outburst in favor of the black coat, and at the same time to avoid the ridicule which they knew would attach to their appearing in a common dress at court, led to humiliating devices. Mr. Soulé adopted the shad-bellied, black velvet embroidered coat and small-clothes of the Municipal Council of Paris, said also to have been used by Dr. Franklin. Mr. Buchanan wore a black or blue coat, white waistcoat, small-clothes, silk stockings, a sword, and *chapeau bras*! Mr. Dallas is understood to have adopted the same costume. If we sympathize with these gentlemen for being forced into such humiliating subterfuges, we ought to bestow more serious condemnation upon those who led them into temptation. In some of the northern courts of Europe, I believe our diplomats have adopted the simple black coat.

I understand that the Consul of Alexandria, whose functions are part-

of all countries is transacted between the ambassador and the ministers, and when these persons meet, there is no ceremony. They come together like merchants or lawyers, in their ordinary dress. All the actual business of a foreign minister may therefore be transacted without any particular costume.

But sovereigns surround themselves with a certain etiquette, and they require all who approach them to conform to this. When Queen Victoria invites persons to visit her, it is of course upon condition that they adopt the usages of the court. No one, whatever his rank or station, can claim exemption from this rule. It must be remembered that on all such occasions, the invitation is considered a compliment, and hence well-bred persons, who take advantage of it, feel constrained, by self-respect and a sense of propriety, scrupulously to regard and fulfill the conditions upon which this invitation is bestowed.

Now, it must be remembered that what is called a court costume, is only required of a minister on occasions of mere ceremony or festivity, when he appears by invitation of the sovereign. If he comes, it is not to transact business, but for amusement. He

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ly diplomatic, wears a blue coat with thirty-one stars, wrought in gold, on the collar. This is a beautiful idea, and might suggest to our government a very simple and appropriate consular and diplomatic costume. Some costume—distinct and national and perfectly understood in all countries—is really important, as well for our consuls as diplomats. Those who insist upon the black coat, show a total ignorance of the duties and position of our public officers abroad, and of the nations among whom they officiate.

may stay away, and nothing belonging to his diplomatic affairs will suffer. Why, then, if he accepts the invitation, should he not conform to the prescribed usages of the court? It is generally considered evidence of a want of gentlemanly breeding, an act of positive vulgarity, for any person to take advantage of a polite invitation, and refuse to conform to the conditions imposed by the host. Above all, it would seem that an ambassador, representing a nation before a foreign court, should be scrupulous to observe the known and established rules of decorum.

It must be remembered that propriety of costume—that is, a dress suited to the taste and fashion prevailing where it is worn, is in all civilized countries a matter of decency. It has been so among all refined nations, and from the earliest ages. One of the most solemn of our Saviour's parables is founded upon a breach of decorum in regard to costume—the appearance of a man at the wedding of the king's son, without a wedding garment. Similar ideas are just as current among us as elsewhere. If a clergyman were to go into the pulpit dressed in a military coat, it would shock the whole audience, and be considered an insult alike to them and to the clerical profession. If a lady issues cards of invitation to a ball, and a man, who takes advantage of the invitation, comes in a sailor's roundabout, he would be held as an ill-bred fellow, and as such would be turned out of

doors. He may plead that he had simply cut off the tail of his coat, and as he considered an artificial appendage of this kind derogatory to a free-born man, his principles forbade him to wear it. The answer is, you are welcome to carry out your principles, but if you accept an invitation given to you out of politeness, it is expected and required that you conform to the known usages and decencies of society.

Now in monarchical countries long usage has established it in the public mind, that to appear at court\* without a court costume, would be a species of indecency, an offense against the company present, as well as the parties giving the invitation. We may rail at it as much as we please in this country, yet we can not alter the fact I state.

Taking the matter in this point of view, let us consider the situation of our diplomatic representatives under Mr. Marcy's circular. Had the black coat been prescribed, as I have said before, there would have been an end of the matter. Our ministers and *chargés* would have been dressed in black, that is, like the servants of a *café*, while all around

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\* In general, a person who should attempt to enter at a court reception, without a proper costume, would be stopped at the door: if he should, by accident, gain admittance, he would probably be invited to leave the room. A professional dress, as that of a soldier, a clergyman, &c., is considered a proper costume at Paris, and I believe at most other courts. If a person is not professional, he must wear either the prescribed costume of his own country, or that of the court to which he is introduced. The British minister will introduce no one at a foreign court, who has not been previously presented to the Queen at home.



them would have appeared in appropriate costumes; and thus, in the midst of an assemblage, consisting of the most exalted rank, the highest refinement, the most distinguished ability—the representative of the United States would either have passed unnoticed as a servant, or been remarked upon as an object of ridicule, perhaps of contempt. That would have been all.

But this condition of things was not vouchsafed to our ministers: if they obeyed the circular, and carried the black coat to court, it was known to be in some degree voluntary, and was so far the more offensive on the part of the individual wearing it. Mr. Sanford, our Chargé at Paris, acting from a just regard to the wishes of his government, tried the experiment under many advantages. He was a young gentleman of good address, and held a respectable position in the higher circles of society connected with the court. He was admitted to the Tuileries in his black suit, but was of course an object of much observation and comment. His character—personal and official—protected him from indignity, either of word or look, but the act was considered offensive as well in the palace as in the various branches of society in connection with it. About this time Louis Napoleon was forming his new imperial court, and seeking to give it every degree of splendor. He had prescribed rich costumes for his officers, military and civil, and had directed that their wives

should appear in their most splendid attire. All the persons connected with the court entered into this spirit. For the American Chargé to present himself in simple black, at this particular time, looked like rebuke, and was, I believe, regarded in this light. Had Mr. Sanford continued in his office at Paris, and had he persevered, he would, perhaps, by his amiable personal character and pleasing address, have removed these difficulties, though it is quite as possible that he might have found his situation intolerable, not from open affront, but from those sly yet galling attacks, which the polished habitués of courts know so well how to make, even in the midst of smiles and seeming caresses. As it happened, Mr. Mason soon after arrived in Paris as full minister, and appreciating the result of Mr. Sanford's experiment, adopted the usual diplomatic costume.

For my own part, I can not see the utility of making ourselves disagreeable, and at the same time jeopardizing the real interests of our country, in such a matter as that of the dress of our diplomatic representatives. Our policy should be to cultivate peace with all the world, but it would seem of late that our desire is rather to array all the nations against us. Within the last three years we have lost nearly all our friends in Europe. The Ostend Congress, with its startling doctrines, produced a deep and pervading feeling of reprehension, and the circulars of "Citizen Saunders" created still more lively emotions of irritation

and resentment.\* The character and conduct of several of our consuls and diplomats, in different parts of Europe, together with our Secretary's well-meant attempts to improve the taste of the European courts in the matter of dress, have all contributed to degrade the American name in foreign countries.

Such are, briefly, my views of Mr. Marcy's diplomatic circular. It seems to have been ill advised, and though its motive was no doubt good, it must have been adopted without full inquiry into the subject. Had the State Department taken the precaution to address our ministers and consuls on the subject, the answer would have been such as to have prevented the ridicule brought upon the country by this measure. The present state of things is embarrassing to our foreign ministers, and derogatory to the country. The true plan is to adopt some simple and appropriate costume, and make it obligatory. If the black coat is to be preferred, then let it be prescribed, so

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\* Mr. Saunders' Circulars were addressed, one to the President of the Swiss Cantons and the other to the French people—the latter being of a very incendiary character. These were translated into various languages, and scattered all over Europe, by the Italian and French exiles in London. I saw one of these, with a preface by Saffi, in which he stated that the writer, Citizen Saunders, was *Consul General* of the United States in Great Britain, that he was very intimate with Mr. Buchanan, the American minister at London, and thus conveying the idea that he spoke officially, in some degree, for the United States. A certain authority was lent to these documents by the statement that they were circulated in France under the seal of the American Legation in London. To judge of the effect produced by all this, let us consider what would be the feeling of our people, if some foreign official should undertake to teach us our duty, and should even call upon us to cut the throats of our rulers!

that the responsibility may fall on the government and not on him who wears it. And one thing more: let us be consistent; if republicanism requires simplicity, and black is to be our national color, let the "fuss and feathers" of the army and navy be dismissed, and the general as well as the private soldier appear in "the black coat!"

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## LETTER LXII.

*Visit to Italy—Florence—Rome—Naples.*

MY DEAR C\*\*\*\*\*

In the autumn of 1854 I set out with my family for a brief visit to Italy. With all my wanderings I had never seen this far-famed land, and as I was not likely ever to have another opportunity, I felt it to be a kind of duty to avail myself of a few unappropriated weeks, for that object.

It is not my purpose to give you the details of my travels or my observations. A mere outline must suffice. Embarking in a steamer at Marseilles, we soon reached Genoa. Here we went ashore for a few hours, and then returning to our vessel, proceeded on to Leghorn. Taking the railroad at this place, we wound among the hills, and, having passed Pisa, catching a glimpse of its Leaning Tower, arrived at Florence. In this journey of five days, we had passed from Paris to the center of Italy.

Florence\* is situated in a small but fertile valley, on either side of which rise a great number of precipitous hills; behind these is a succession of still greater elevations, with rocky summits reaching at last to the Apennines on the north, and other ranges on the south and west. A narrow stream, poetically called the "yellow Arno" or "golden Arno," but in honest phrase, the muddy Arno, flows nearly through the center of the city. This is bordered by stone quays, leaving a space of about three hundred feet in width, sometimes full and sometimes only a bed of gravel, along which winds the stream shrunken into an insignificant rivulet. The Arno is in fact a sort of mountain torrent; its source is nearly five thousand feet above the level of the sea, yet its whole course is but seventy-five miles. The steep acclivities around Florence suddenly empty the rains into its channel, and it often swells in the course of a few hours to inundation; it subsides as speedily, and in summer almost disappears amid the furrows of its sandy bed.

If we were to judge Florence by a modern standard, we might pronounce it a dull, dismal-looking

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\* Florence has a population of one hundred and ten thousand inhabitants, but it is so compactly built as to occupy a very small territorial space. It is surrounded by a wall, partly of brick and partly of stone, and yet so feeble and dilapidated, as to be wholly useless, except for the purposes of police. It has six gates, duly guarded by military sentries. It is the capital of Tuscany, which is called a Grand Duchy, the Grand Duke, its present ruler, Leopold II., being an Austrian prince. The government is a rigid despotism, sustained by means of a few thousand Austrian troops, and the moral influence of the authority of Austria itself, ever ready to rush to the aid of the government.

place, marred by dilapidation, degraded by tyranny, and occupied by a degenerate people. But when we enter its galleries of art,\* when we survey its monuments of architecture, and when we view all these in connection with its history, we speedily discover it to be an inexhaustible mine, alike instructive to the philosopher and the man of taste.

I dare not begin upon the curiosities with which this city is filled : I must leave them to be described by others. The hills around the city are equally interesting, studded as they are with edifices, connected with the names of Michael Angelo, Galileo, Dante, Lorenzo de' Medici, and others, all full of historical associations or recollections of science and art. At the distance of about five miles is Fiésolo, now an insignificant village, situated on the top of a steep hill, rising a thousand feet above the bed of the valley. This you ascend by a winding road, built with immense labor, a portion of it cut in the solid rock. This place was the cradle of Florence, its history reaching back three thousand years, into the thick mists of antiquity.

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\* The principal gallery, the Uffizi, contains the statue of the Venus de' Medici, the group of Niobe, and the most extensive collection of paintings and statuary illustrative of the history and progress of art, in the world. The collection in the Pitti Palace, the residence of the Grand Duke, is less extensive, but it is beautifully arranged, and comprises many gems of art, especially in painting and mosaic. Mr. Powers and Mr. Hart, American sculptors, celebrated for their busts in marble, are established in this city. Here we met Buchanan Read, who had just finished his charming poem, *The New Pastoral* ; at the same time he was acquiring hardly less celebrity by his pencil.



Here are Cyclopean walls, constructed by the early inhabitants to protect themselves at a period when all Italy was in the possession of bands of brigands and robbers, and when every town and village was a fortress. From this point you look down upon Florence, which almost seems at your feet; you have also a commanding view of the whole adjacent country. If you inquire the names of places that attract your attention, you will be carried back to periods anterior to the building of Rome. The guide will point you to the track of Hannibal through the marshes of the Arno, then a wilderness without inhabitants, amid which the Carthaginian general lost a number of elephants, and whose tusks are even at this day dug up from their deep beds in the soil. Allow me to give you a somewhat prosy description in rhyme of this wonderful and suggestive place—the best in the world to study early Roman geography and history—which I wrote on the spot, and which has at least the merit of being brief:

This is Fiésolo—a giant mound,  
With fellow-giants circling phalanx'd round;  
Hoary with untold centuries they rest,  
Yet to the top with waving olives dress'd,  
While far beyond in rugged peaks arise  
The dark-blue Apennines against the skies.  
In this deep vale, with sentried hills around,  
Set foot to foot, and all with villas crown'd,  
Fair Florence lies—its huge Duomo flinging  
E'en to Fiésolo its silvery ringing.

Ah, what a varied page these scenes unfold—  
How much is written, yet how much untold !  
Here on this mound, the huge Cyclopean wall—  
Its builders lost in Time's unheeding thrall—  
Speaks of whole nations, ages, kingdoms, races,  
Of towers and cities, palaces and places—  
Of wars and sieges, marches, battles, strife,  
The hopes and fears—the agonies of life—  
All pass'd away, their throbbing weal and woe,  
E'er Rome was built, three thousand years ago !

On the twenty-second day of February we entered Rome, and found the peach-trees in blossom. The modern city is in no respect remarkable. Its walls are of some strength, but readily yielded to the attack of the French army in 1849. Its present population is one hundred and seventy-five thousand. All the streets are narrow, and even the far-famed Corso is not over fifty feet wide. In general, the buildings appear to be of modern date, with here and there some grand monument of antiquity peering out from the midst of more recent structures. On the whole, the aspect of this "Queen of the World" is eminently sad, degenerate, and disheartening.

The more imposing relics of antiquity, the Forum, the Palace of the Cæsars, the Coliseum, the Baths of Caracalla, though within the walls, are still on the southern side of the city, and beyond the present center of population. All these are gigantic structures, but mostly of a barbarous character. They show the amazing power and wealth of the emperors who con

structed these works, but they also display the actual poverty of art, for there is not one of them that can furnish a useful suggestion to even a house-carpenter. The vain and transitory nature of the ideas and institutions which gave birth to these miracles of labor, strikes the reflecting mind with a deep and painful sense of humiliation. The Coliseum, the most sublime monument of accumulated human toil, regarded as to its gigantic proportions, was erected for amusements now held to be alike cruel and revolting; the baths of Caracalla—whole acres covered with mounds of brick—were constructed to minister to fashionable luxuries, which at the present day would be regarded as infamous. In modern times, the same accommodations would be obtained with one-twentieth part of the labor expended upon these establishments. The vanity, the boasting, the ostentation of conquerors, which gave birth to the triumphal arches, would at this day be looked upon with universal contempt. The temples were erected to gods, which have vanished into thin air. The Aqueducts, whose ruins stretch across the gloomy Campagna, looking like long lines of marching mastodons, were erected in ignorance of that familiar fact, visible to any one who looks into a teapot, that water will rise to its level!

The great lesson to be learned at Rome is that of humility. I know not which is most calculated to sink the pride of man, pagan Rome, sublime in the grandeur of its tyranny, its vices, and its falsehoods,

or Christian Rome, contemptible in its littleness, its tricks, and its artifices, which would disgrace the commonest juggler.

I speak not now of the treasures of art,\* collected to repletion in the public and private galleries of this wonderful city. These are endless in extent and variety. Among them are the finest paintings of Raphael, and the best sculptures of Michael Angelo, as well as the Dying Gladiator and the Apollo Belvidere. Here, also, is that rich, gorgeous palace, called St. Peter's Church. But still, Rome, on the whole, seems to me the most melancholy spot on earth. Here is a city which once contained three or four millions of

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\* Rome is not only a depository of exhaustless stores of relics of art, and curiosities illustrative of history, but it is the great studio of living artists from all parts of Europe. Both painting and sculpture are pursued here with eminent success. The Angel of the Resurrection in the studio of Tenerani, is the most beautiful and sublime piece of sculpture I ever beheld. Gibson, an Englishman, takes the lead among foreigners, his best things consisting of reliefs, which are beautiful indeed. His Venus is English, but fine. He has tried coloring statuary, after the manner of the ancients, but it is not approved. Our American Crawford ranks very high for invention and poetic expression. He has shown a capacity beyond any other American sculptor, for groups on a large scale. Bartholomew, of Connecticut, is a man of decided genius, and is rapidly attaining fame. Ives, Mosier, Rogers—all our countrymen—are acquiring celebrity.

Among the foreign painters, the most celebrated is Overbeck, a German. He chooses religious subjects, and is a little pre-Raphaelitish in his style. Page, Terry, Chapman, are all highly appreciated, both at home and abroad. I here met the landscape painter, George L. Brown, whom I employed twenty years ago, for a twelvemonth, as a wood-engraver. He has studied laboriously of late, and his pictures are beautiful. When he was a boy, he painted a picture, the first he ever finished. Isaac P. Davis, of Boston, a well-known amateur, called to see it, and asked the price. Brown meant to say fifty cents, but in his confusion said fifty dollars. It was taken by Mr. Davis at this price: so the wood-cutter became a landscape painter!

inhabitants, now shrunk and wasted to a population of less than two hundred thousand, and these living upon the mere ruins of the past. The Christian Church is but little better than a collection of bats and owls, nestling in the ruinous structures erected for the gods and goddesses of heathen antiquity.

Nor is this the most appalling fact here presented to the traveler. Around this place is a belt of undulating land called the Campagna, eight or ten miles in width, fertile by nature, and once covered with a busy population; this has become desolate, and is now tenanted only by sheep and cattle. The air is poisoned, and man breathes it at his peril. To sleep in it is death. And this change has come over it while it claims to be the very seat and center of Christianity, the residence of the Successor of the Apostles, the Head of the Catholic Church, the Representative of Christ on earth, the Spiritual Father of a hundred and fifty millions of souls! Is not this mysterious, fearful?

We reached Naples about the first of April. Here the character of the climate and of the people becomes thoroughly Italian. The Bay of Naples can not be too much praised. Not only do the prominent objects—the crescent-shaped city, rising terrace above terrace on the north; Vesuvius, with its double cone in the east, and the islands of Capri and Ischia at the south—form a beautiful boundary to the view, but the water and the sky and the air have all a live-

liness, a cheerfulness, which calls upon the heart to be gay. The Neapolitan is, in truth, constantly preached to by nature, to sing and dance and be happy. It is impossible for any one to resist this influence of the climate—of the earth and the sea and the air—in this region of enchantment. It appears that the ancient Romans felt and yielded to its force. In the vicinity was Puzzuoli, a renowned watering-place, the hills around being still studded with the vestiges of villas once inhabited by the Roman patricians; near by was Cumæ, long a seat and center of taste and luxury; close at hand was Baiæ, the Baden Baden of fashion in the time of Cicero—its ruins abundantly attesting the luxury as well as the licentiousness of those days. In the mouth of the bay was Capri, chosen by Tiberius as the scene of his imperial orgies, in consideration of its delicious climate and picturesque scenery. The whole region is indeed covered over with monuments of Rome in the day of its glory, testifying to the full appreciation of the beauties of the sky and the climate, on the part of its patrician population.

As to the city of Naples itself I shall not speak; though its people, its institutions, its repositories of art, its Museum of vestiges taken from the buried cities of Pompeii and Herculaneum, would furnish interesting subjects of description. I have only to add that after a stay of a month, I left it with reluctance, and returned to Paris. When I arrived, the



Great Exposition was on the eve of being opened. I remained till July, and had several opportunities to examine this marvelous array of the world's art and industry. On the fourth of the same month I departed for the United States, and arriving in New York, found anchorage for myself and family in that city.

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## LETTER LXIII.

*Leave-taking—Improvement everywhere—In Science—Geology, Chemistry, Agriculture, Manufactures, Astronomy, Navigation, the Domestic Arts—Anthracite Coal—Traveling—Painting—Daguerreotypes—The Electric Telegraph—Moral Progress—In Foreign Countries; in the United States.*

MY DEAR C\*\*\*\*\*

I have now come to my farewell. Leave-takings are in general somewhat melancholy, and it is best to make them as brief as possible. Mine shall consist of a single train of thought, and that suggestive of cheerful rather than mournful feelings. Like a traveler approaching the end of his journey, I naturally cast a look backward, and surveying the monuments which rise up in the distance, seek to estimate the nature and tendency of the march of events which I have witnessed, and in which I have participated.

One general remark appears to me applicable to the half century over which my observation has extended, which is, that everywhere there has been improvement. I know of no department of human

knowledge, no sphere of human inquiry, no race of men, no region of the earth, where there has been retrogradation. On the whole, the age has been alike fruitful in discovery, and the practical, beneficial results of discovery. Science has advanced with giant strides, and it is the distinguishing characteristic of modern science that it is not the mere toy of the philosopher, nor the hidden mystery of the laboratory, but the hard-working servant of the manufactory, the workshop, and the kitchen. Geology not only instructs us in the sublime history of the formation of the earth, but it teaches us to understand its hidden depths, and to trace out and discover its mineral treasures. Chemistry, the science of atoms, teaching us the component parts of matter, as well as the laws of affinity and repulsion, has put us in possession of a vast range of convenient knowledge now in daily and familiar use in the domestic arts. We have even express treatises upon the "Chemistry of Common Life." Astronomy has not only introduced to us new planets and the sublime phenomena of the depths hitherto beyond our reach, but it has condescended to aid in perfecting the art of navigation, and thus contributed to make the sea the safe and familiar highway of the nations.

We can best appreciate the progress of things around us, by looking at particular facts. Take anthracite coal, for instance, which, when I was a boy, was unknown, or only regarded as a black, shining, useless

stone; now six millions of tons are annually dug up and distributed. Think of the labor that is performed by this mass of matter, that had slumbered for ages—hidden, senseless, dead, in the bosom of the earth! It now not only cooks our food and warms our houses so as in winter to give us the climate of summer, but the sleeper, waked from its tomb, like a giant impatient of the time he has lost, turns the whizzing wheel of the factory, sends the screaming locomotive on its way, drives the steamboat foaming through the waves. This single mineral now performs, every day, the labor of at least a hundred thousand men!

On every hand are the evidences of improvement. What advances have been made in agriculture—in the analysis of soils, the preparation of manures, the improvement of implements, from the spade to the steam-reaper; in the manufacture of textile fabrics by the inventions of Jacquard and others in weaving, and innumerable devices in spinning; in the working of iron—cutting, melting, molding, rolling, shaping it like dough, whereby it is applied to a thousand new uses; in commerce and navigation, by improved models of ships, improved chronometers, barometers, and quadrants—in chain-pumps and wheel-rudders; in printing, by the use of the power-press, throwing off a hundred thousand impressions instead of two thousand in a day; in the taking of likenesses by the daguerreotype, making the Sun himself the painter of miniatures; in microscopes, which have revealed new

worlds in the infinity of littleness, as well as in telescopes which have unfolded immeasurable depths of space before hidden from the view. How has traveling been changed, from jolting along at the rate of six miles an hour over rough roads in a stage-coach, to the putting one's self comfortably to bed in a steamboat and going fifteen miles an hour; or sitting down in a railroad car at New York to read a novel, and before you have finished, to find yourself at Boston! The whole standard of life and comfort has been changed, especially in the cities. The miracles of antiquity are between each thumb and finger now; a friction-match gives us fire and light, the turn of a cock brings us water, bright as from Castalia. We have summer in our houses, even through the rigors of winter. We light our streets by gas, and turn night into day. Steam brings to the temperate zone the fresh fruits of the tropics; ether mitigates the agonies of surgical operations; ice converts even the fires of Sirius into sources of luxury.

These are marvels, yet not the greatest of marvels. Think—instead of dispatching a letter in a mail-bag, with the hope of getting an answer in a month—of sending your thoughts alive along a wire winged with electricity, to New Orleans or Canada, to Charleston or St. Louis, and getting a reply in the course of a few hours! This is the miracle of human inventions, the crowning glory of art, at once the most ingenious, the most gratifying, the most startling of discoveries. I

know of nothing in the whole range of human contrivances which excites such exulting emotions in the mind of man, as the electric telegraph.\* It is giving wings of light to the mind, and here on earth imparting to the soul, some of the anticipated powers which imagination tells us the spirit may exercise in the

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\* The original profession of Samuel Finley Morse, the inventor of the electric telegraph, was that of an historical painter. He went to Europe for the purpose of perfecting himself in this, the second time, in 1824. In the autumn of 1832 he was returning in a ship from Havre, when the subject of electro-magnetism one day became the theme of conversation at the lunch-table. The fact that an electric spark could be obtained from a magnet, had led to the new science of magneto-electricity. Reflecting upon this, the idea of making electricity the means of telegraphic communication struck him with great force. It appears that in this conception he had been anticipated by scientific men, but nothing had been effected toward realizing it. Mr. Morse, after earnest and absorbing reflection upon this subject during his voyage, on his arrival set himself to the task of making it practical, and the plan he finally discovered and laid before the world was entirely original with him. All telegraphists before used evanescent signs; his system included not only the use of a new agent, but a self-recording apparatus, adding to the celerity of lighting almost the gift of speech. This was a new and wonderful art—that of a speaking and printing telegraph!

It would be interesting, if I had space, to trace this invention through all its alternations in the mind, feelings, and experiments of its producer. I can only say that after encountering and overcoming innumerable obstacles, the instrument was made to work on a small but decisive scale, in 1835. In 1837 he established his apparatus at Washington, and, as every thing seemed to promise success, he made an arrangement with a member of Congress (F. O. J. Smith) to take an interest in the patent, and to proceed forthwith to Europe to secure patents there. This was done, and Mr. Morse soon joined his associate in England. The expedition resulted only in long embarrassment and disaster to the inventor. Having returned to the United States, and successfully struggling with obstacles and adversities, he finally obtained the assistance of the government, and a line of telegraph was built from Washington to Baltimore. After some mistakes and many failures, the work proved successful, effective experiments having been made in 1844. The first sentence sent over the line is said to have been dictated by Miss Anna Ellsworth, daughter of H. L. Ellsworth, then commissioner of patents—

world above! Having achieved so much, who shall dare to set limits to the power of human invention?

And in the moral world, the last fifty years appear to me to have shown an improvement, if not as marked, yet as certain and positive, as in the material world. Everywhere, as I believe, the standard of humanity is more elevated than before. About a century ago, an eminent New England divine, afterward president of Yale College, sent a barrel of rum to Africa by a Rhode Island captain, and got in return a negro boy, whom he held as a slave, and this was not an offence. I know of a distinguished D. D. who was a distiller of New England rum half a century ago, and with no loss of reputation. The rules by which we try candidates for office are much more rigid than formerly. Church discipline among all sects is more severe, while sectarian charity is greatly enlarged. Christian missions are among the established institutions of society; education is everywhere improved and extended. If in some things, with the increase of wealth and luxury, we have degenerated, on the whole there has been an immense

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“What hath God wrought?” It was indeed a natural and beautiful idea, at the moment that man had opened a new and startling development of the works of the Almighty. The means of instantly transmitting intelligence through space, seems to illustrate not only the omnipotence, but the omniscience and omnipresence of God.

Thus the telegraph was established, and though Mr. Morse has encountered opposition, rivalry, and almost fatal competition, he is generally admitted throughout the world to be the true inventor of this greatest marvel of art, the electric telegraph.



advance, as well in technical morals as in those large humanities which aim at the good of all mankind.

If we cast our eyes over foreign lands, we shall see a similar if not an equal progress in all that belongs to the comforts and the charities of life. Despotism still reigns over a large part of the world, but its spirit is mitigated, its heart softened. Dungeons and chains are not now the great instruments of government. There is everywhere—more especially in all parts of Christendom—a feeling of responsibility on the part of even kings and princes, to the universal principles of justice and humanity. There is a moral sense, a moral law among mankind, which tyrants dare not set at defiance!

Such has been the tendency of things within the half century which has passed under my observation. If, then, I am an optimist, it is as much from reason and reflection as from sentiment. In looking at the political condition of our country, there are no doubt threatening clouds in the sky, and mutterings of ominous thunders in the distance. I have, however, known such things before; I have seen the country shaken to its center by the fierce collisions of parties, and the open assaults of the spirit of disunion. But these dangers passed away. Within my memory, the States of the Union have been doubled in number, and the territory of the Union has been trebled in extent! This I have seen; and as such has been the past, so may be, and so I trust will be, the future. Farewell!

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